

D'ARCY CONYERS

BERTAL HEENEY


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D'ARCY CONYERS



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D'ARCY CONYERS

BY
BERTAL HEENEY

Author of "Pickanock", etc.



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FOREWORD

This is the story of D'Arcy Conyers. It is written by one who holds that the present world is a fair place; not less so, but rather more, because broken in upon at every turn by the spiritual and the mysterious. Those who chance to have this view-point, will be first to overlook its defects of structure or of style.

Winnipeg, January 31, 1922.

B. H.

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D'ARCY CONYERS

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CHAPTER I

WHERE D'ARCY WENT TO SCHOOL AND WHY

SHOUTING and leaping for joy they bolted through the school-house door, a pack of bare-footed lads, and made off, lunch in hand, across the open field toward the lake. With mighty strides they descended the steep pathway to the swimming place in Sandy Bay. A noisy moment or two in the thicket for undressing, and the fun was under way without thought of limit or restraint—the running out into the depths, the splashing, the ducking, and the diving from log ends; boys plunging; spray leaping in the sunshine; a medley of merry noises resounding along the shores; and loud exclamations of joy and pride,—“Watch this!” “See my plunge!” “Here goes!”—and such like.

Thus through the noon hour of every summer day, rain or shine, this wild joy went on without abatement, till the bell rang again, calling them back to school where authority and force often reigned defiantly in the place of intelligence and sympathy, baffling rather than assisting nature's efforts.

The school house at Danford was mottled dark and yellow with age and the weather, and to the shingles on its pyramidal roof there was clinging many a tiny clump of green moss, rooted in joints and crevices. This modest home of learning stood close by a great white rock as though held there by some unseen attachment. About the place was a field of goodly size where flocks of sheep moved lazily and nibbled the scanty grass on its gravelly soil. Not far away a ridge of wooded hills rose as though to break the west wind and give a hiding place to the evening sun. In an opposite direction and nestling down among the green trees, was the lake which lent its name to school and district alike.

Indeed, it was this irregular-shaped body of limpid water that gave origin to the community along its own fair shores; for here in days at least half a generation prior to the date at which our story begins, pine forests of most luxuriant growth had spread over a soil that was as good for cultivation as any in a land ill adapted to the pursuit of husbandry. If the fathers of the settlement, yielding themselves to the sway of the stately and sombre pines, came to clear and dwell about its banks, their sons were long held in a willing captivity by the lake itself, with its curving shores of green, its lucid depths of water, the multitude and variety of its fishes, the flocks of black duck bred among its rushes, the loud calling of the wary loon, and the thousand joys which youth finds for itself when free to wander where Mother Nature beckons or compels. As for D'Arcy Conyers

and the other boys who came from year to year to Danford, the lake made life tolerable in spite of the severity of the tasks assigned them, the teacher's unkindly manner, the ill-suited structure of the desks and seats, and the intensity of the summer sun which fell upon the roof above their heads with never a tree to intercept its blistering rays.

"Lucky boys!" you say, "Lucky boys!" and I reply, "Most fortunate indeed," if you refer to the charms of the locality in which these careless fellows went to school; for what tends more to wholesomeness of manhood than the awakening of the soul where nature is both beautiful and friendly? And I may add the query, what source of enjoyment is so sweet and so unfailing in after years?

But, however fully agreed we may be as to the good fortune which befell the boys of a school so fairly situated, and however keen was the wit of Mr. Samuel Conyers at seizing and turning to account the advantages of life for himself and his family, it was scarcely regard for the beauty of the place which led him to order that his third son, D'Arcy must go to the Danford school for his education.

Had the surroundings been a matter of the first moment in his mind the district school close by the Conyers' home, might have proven itself more than a fair competitor for the honour of numbering among its pupils the promising son of so considerable a family; for it stood in a beautiful spot looking out over the sparkling river

Gatineau, where patches of yellow sand-bar lay in the living waters like spots of gold in flowing silver.

It may well have been, however, that even a parent so wise in his generation as D'Arcy Conyers' father, had no soul for natural beauty and consequently gave but little value to it as a factor in his son's education. Or he may have said to himself, with right well-founded pride in his country's charms, "Beauty, if you please! Sure, we needn't consider the matter of beauty in this fair land of ours, for beauty and grandeur are about us wherever we go!" It is more likely, however, that the question never entered his practical head. Not that he was by any means a dull man, but his soul was blind of one eye, which is something different from having no soul at all, and possibly something worse.

If however, the reader would be specifically informed as to why D'Arcy was sent off to the Danford School he need only enter the Conyers home on a certain autumn evening when late twilight was falling on all the beautiful world outside. It is the choicest hour of day, wherein little eyes are sleepy and older minds roam at will in the garden of domestic happiness. D'Arcy was then a lad of ten and having been cosily tucked away in bed by his mother, and twice kissed, was left to the sweet slumbers of childhood while she returned to her place of work at the end of the kitchen table, where the lamp glowed upon her sweet face many a busy night of every year.

Moreover, it was autumn, so there was a fire in the cook-stove, and the kettle singing its merry song poured forth a filmy column of moving mist, while Samuel Conyers, in his working clothes, stood with his hands behind his back, and his back to the comfortable fire, puffing forth little clouds of smoke from his pipe, the very picture of industrious and contented manhood.

When his wife entered the apartment after putting D'Arcy to bed, he betook himself to a chair which stood at the front of the stove and sat down. Placing his feet on the stove-pan, he allowed them to remain there but for a moment, and then let them drop to the floor. He next stretched out his legs at full length and crossed them comfortably under the stove. Taking his pipe from his mouth, he leaned forward, tapped it on the edge of the stove to remove the ash, then restored it to his teeth and gave it two or three short, sharp blows to clear the stem. Holding it there somewhat loosely so that it dropped low and almost touched his brown beard, he began to cut his tobacco and then to grind it in the hollow of his hand for another smoke.

It was apparent both from his movements and the expression on his countenance that something other than the humdrum affairs of farm life was agitating his active brain.

The pipe being now lighted and put in full and satisfying operation, he broke silence with the following remark; "Well Jane, they're off again!"

"Yes, thank God," replied his wife. "We know they're safe when they are in their beds and we

can tuck them away; but they'll soon grow up and go out into the world, and then. . . ."

Here Mrs. Conyers broke off, for a stiffening always came in her throat when she thought of the day when her children would leave herself and home.

S. Conyers, Esq., as he liked to think of himself, though seldom actually unkind to his spouse, whom he greatly admired, had less than a little sympathy with the emotional side of her nature and consequently his face took on an expression of severity as his wife brushed the tears away first from one eye and then from the other. He was one of those men who could be stern or pleasant as suited his purpose, but never by any chance did he rise to the height of genuine sympathy that beautiful flower of unselfishness which only God can plant in the soul of man.

"Jane!" he ejaculated, as he rose and strutted about the room, "I am a practical man. We must do something for D'Arcy, I mean in the way of schooling. He's a bright lad and will make his way in the world. He's not going to be as strong as Tommie and Jim. They can work if they have to; they like the farm and the bush better than their books, and you can't keep them away from the horses. But D'Arcy doesn't seem inclined to work; all for books, and a fair terror at figures. He'll make his fortune in the world, that lad. Bright as a silver dollar! A real Conyers!"

This speech was not intended to be merely a contribution to a discussion in which his wife was to join on equal terms with himself. It aimed

rather at stifling her rising emotions and crushing all serious opposition to his proposal. And it was in the last sentence thereof that he announced the real principles which guided him to a decision; "D'Arcy could make a fortune. D'Arcy was a Conyers." These were his canons of success for himself and for his sons—a fortune and a name.

Having silenced his wife by the peremptory character if not by the brilliancy of his own utterances, he assumed a somewhat more conciliatory tone as he moved towards his objective.

"Jane", he resumed, "you know that I have always held that this boy ought to go to Danford School."

Mild and gentle as Mrs. Conyers was, the last remark brought out a strong rejoinder, for she cared but little for her husband's family pretensions, and firmly held to the unwisdom of "letting a bird from the nest at so early an age."

"Danford School, nonsense!" said she sharply, "he can get all the schooling he needs up here."

"Yes, but wife, S. Conyers' son must have something better than every Tom, Dick, and Harry in the country. D'Arcy ought to have something better! We can pay for it I guess!" he ejaculated, again strutting about with pride of mien and manner as though he had made every copper of the family fortune and his wife had been at most but a necessary condition, rather than a partner, in the business of growing rich.

"The River School is just as good for D'Arcy as for the other children," said Mrs. Conyers very gently, though still in heat of spirit.

“As far as writing and reading and figuring are concerned, yes; but in tone, not a bit of it!” replied her husband. “And there’s something in what people think of themselves,” he added laconically.

It may be said that Mrs. Conyers loved D’Arcy as indeed she did all her children, of whom there were five, but this boy was more distinctly a Conyers, while the other members of the family gave clear evidence of the mother’s finer traits of character—a fact which possibly added a tinge of bitterness which otherwise might not have appeared in the discussion.

And so the debate went on for many nights, but being one of those sweet-minded and submissive souls, more given to living at peace with conditions than to rectifying them through strife, Mrs. Conyers at length reluctantly consented and to Danford School D’Arcy was sent away. Many were the times she said to herself, however, during his painful absence, “Surely the home is a wretched place which is not the best of schools for a boy before he goes to the battle of life. School may give him knowledge, but the home must give him character, and that is the thing of value in the Master’s eyes, as well as of worth to the world. However, I have done my best; husband is husband, and on him must rest the responsibility of deciding the matter. It is mine to advise—yea, to persuade; it may be to win, or to fail, in my efforts, and in either case to obey, and to supplicate the Heavenly Father who will surround my

boy though he knows it not, and may wander for many days!"

Poor dear Mrs. Conyers! Your prayers are needed for the lad, as events will amply prove before this story ends.

CHAPTER II

D'ARCY'S MISFORTUNE AND HOW HE CAME BY IT

WHEN D'Arcy Conyers entered the Dandford School, the dame who received him from the hands of his father with every show of delight was a person of medium stature with very sharp features. At that moment, however, her countenance was suffused with pleasure to such an extent that its native sternness was scarcely noticeable, and D'Arcy thought her the most sunny of teachers imaginable. To say that she flew about on Mr. Conyers' coming to entrust the most promising of his sons to her tutorial care - most pleasant thought - is quite to understate the truth. She literally fluttered with delight.

"Oh, Mr. Conyers, I am so glad to see you! And D'Arcy here is such a splendid boy and will make such an excellent pupil! I feel quite honoured to have you bring your son so far to put him in my humble charge."

"Not at all, Miss Waring, not at all" replied Mr. Conyers with a characteristic swagger, "the best for the best you know, Miss Waring. That's my motto," and he laughed, being pleased with his own remark.

D'Arcy seated himself at the teacher's request, and Mr. Conyers, after bidding his son good-bye

stepped towards the door, intending to take his departure at once, but recalling something which in his opinion should be said to the teacher, he paused for a moment and whispered, "You know Miss Waring, people must think something of themselves in this world. I love things above the common, in fact out of the ordinary." So saying, he laughed again with self-satisfaction. The teacher laughed also, meantime exclaiming, "Quite so, quite so, Mr. Conyers," and closing the door behind her visitor she returned to her place of authority in the corner of the one large room which constituted the scene of her daily instructions.

Miss Susanna Waring, as we have said, was rather short of stature, and had a wealth of hair; it was dark, in fact it was black, jet black; and it parted distinctly above a goodly brow, whereon more than one wrinkle told of bursts of temper often indulged in, rather than of advancing years. Her eyebrows were also black and very heavy; and they drew near to each other as though ready at any moment to meet in love or conflict. Beneath these black shaggy brows a pair of sparkling brown eyes were set far in, and their lids were adorned with heavy lashes. As for her nose it was well formed, though sharp and a little too prominent for beauty. Her lips were red, what there was of them, and tightly set; when they parted two rows of teeth were displayed of perfect form and of such clearness that they could only be described as like unto purest ivory. There was never a touch of red on her cheeks save when temper brought it there. The whole face indeed was pal-

lid; there was a faint darkness over it however, as it were a shadow cast by her heavy dark hair and brows; and it bore the marks of that enemy of all womanly beauty, smallpox.

Miss Susanna Waring seldom consciously smiled, though not infrequently she laughed. This is often the way with peppery-tempered persons. For there is good humour in every one, and if it may not run away in gentle rills it will burst at last in a torrent of hilarity. It is true enough Miss Susanna Waring did smile from time to time during school hours, but seldom consciously. It was, as the saying went at Danford School, "unbeknown to herself," if she smiled at all. It was quite the usual thing, however, for Miss Waring to wander far off from the present realities as she sat there in her corner of light and authority, and to see visions of a very pleasant character, belonging to other days. While these soul-flights were in progress her face lost its fixed expression and softened its sharpness, in a word, she smiled; the dark pallid countenance was actually visited by a touch of sunlight; the red lips parted, the ivory teeth glinted through, and a perpetual whispering went on about her lips, as though she were conversing with animation to delightful friends of some happy days gone by.

The children watched from behind their books for the approach of these moments of reverie, for they, innocent creatures, would have all their enjoyment in the present hours; and not once only in the day did it happen that a book fell, or a pencil rolled from the slanting desk, or a slate

clattered to the floor, or a laugh was stifled, for their merriment could scarcely be restrained from breaking forth into dangerous pranks.

Even in the life of this dark little dame of doubtful age, however, all pleasant experiences were not born of visions which memory conjured up from days of yore. When D'Arcy had been well nigh a twelve month enrolled among the members of the Danford School, an incident befell which gave rise to the desire for pleasurable excitement among the children, and set the school mistress smiling and chattering to herself over the recollection of experiences in the near, rather than the distant past. For where is the woman so advanced in years that the prospect of marriage does not bring her happiness? Or where is the corner of the earth so remote and lonely that love cannot and will not penetrate? Certainly Danford was beyond the city's throng and hum, and it cannot be questioned but that Miss Susanna Waring was of mature age. Still love came to her one day—right to her very school door, and in consequence turned back the hands of Time for at least three decades and caused the wilderness of the backwoods to blossom like the garden of the Lord. Thereafter when school assembled in the morning, be the weather fair or wet, she had smiles abundant for every pupil, even the most troublesome. During school hours she showed a new tendency to reduce the grinding work of class and leave the children more time for preparation, though at least the biggest of them knew full well that this gentle consideration was born of a desire to secure for her-

self more space for sweet dreams to float in. And when the clock on the wall struck—One—Two—Three — Four — in quick succession, all but the worst offenders against her authority were pardoned, and even these were kept but the shortest time in punishment; for Miss Suzanna Waring must go a-walking by the lake shore, her hands behind her back, her little dark face radiant with happiness and her thin lips quivering with living words.

O the joy of it all! Was the lake ever so blue and so spangled with sunlight! Did the leaves on the trees ever rustle so blithely and the winds of summer give quite such cadences and crescendos among the topmost branches? And did birds ever sing so sweetly, or the flowers have just the breath of these, and just these tints? Oh no, never, never! For the conquest of the little black school marm was complete—the only real conquest which ever comes to mortals had come to her all unexpected—she was submerged in love over ears and head!

Miss Waring's new and happy state of mind and heart came to her in this way: There was a rosy checked old gentleman, with long, brown side-whiskers, and a goodly brow, who dwelt not many miles away from Danford School, where the fields were stumpy and rough and the forests green. If he had lived in the backwoods for many years the traces of refinement and good breeding had not left his appearance or his bearing. He had made a comfortable home and enjoyed the respect of all his neighbours.

However, among the misfortunes which fell to his lot was the death of his beloved wife. At the very thought of her virtues he could still weep copiously though now two full years had passed since her demise. But as day follows close upon the heels of night, so hope springs from the very grave of disappointment, and Mr. Noble began to dream dreams of a future with the little black, sharp-featured teacher of Danford School.

We can not delay to make full record of how, in that happy prospect, neatness and youth returned and a certain sprightliness of manner came again to him; of how bright he was with his neighbours, how regularly he appeared at Church, and how an old and forgotten friendship with the Conyers family was revived. We are allowed here only to affirm that one fine day in spring, when not only young men's fancy, as the poet says, but that of some old ones as well, lightly turns to thoughts of love, Mr. Noble donned his best in the way of clothing—the broadcloth coat of a much earlier date in his life, still intact, if sheened somewhat with age and wanting a button here and there, and set off with quick step and no small degree of excitement to the school by the lakeside.

He knocked at the door. The sound of a rap on the door of Danford School was unusual; few called. Hence the fussy school marm flew about excitedly.

“Who could it be? The Inspector come before his time? Why, surely not! The clergyman? O yes. Well, no; he is in a distant part of the parish. Hussh, sh-sh, children.”

Miss Waring, prepared for any emergency except that which awaited her, now stepped to the door. On opening it she burst into a volley of words, expressions, exclamations—at seeing Mr. Noble.

“Come in, will you not, Mr. Noble? Oh, indeed, how unexpected!” So addressing the visitor she stepped back swinging the door wide open to indicate her readiness to receive him.

Mr. Noble was collected, if somewhat tremulous of voice, and lifting his tall hat very politely he said: “No thank you Miss Waring, I cannot this morning; but might I speak to you here for a moment?”

So saying he stepped back a pace on the platform to allow the lady to come forth. And quite unsuspecting of the nature of the visitor's errand, the kind woman (for she was all kindness now) stepped out and pulled to the door holding the latch with one hand.

The details of what took place outside we have no means of knowing, save that during subsequent days, pleasant soliloquies were more common than formerly—the tongue lisped and whispered more persistently and the dark face was lighted up perpetually.

But of what happened within we have more perfect knowledge. First there was a hush; then a smiling; next a soft rustling and a bringing of heads together in whispering. As the absence of the teacher was prolonged, quiet pranks started here and there. Now there is a thud of a falling book, now the sound of stifled laughter; then

silence for a moment while every eye is turned towards the door and every ear set in that direction. As neither sight nor sound illumines the mystery, romping is encouraged on the part of the more daring spirits; and D'Arcy Conyers tiptoes over to the blackboard and sketches quickly upon it, a rude outline of the love making which all suspect is going on between the teacher and her visitor.

When the drawing was finished and the title just going down, the door swung open and in came the smiling and excited Miss Waring. Her countenance took on again its habitual sternness on seeing D'Arcy at the blackboard; and her quick eye caught at a glance the significance of the sketch. D'Arcy had no time for erasures, he was caught in the act, and from past experience he and every pupil in the school knew what to expect.

The teacher composed herself for a moment as best she could, and then said, "I don't blame you children for your innocent amusement; but one crime I must punish—there it is on the board, D'Arcy Conyers is the guilty one."

It was now near four o'clock, the hour for closing. The other children were therefore dismissed and D'Arcy was called up to render an account of his misdemanour.

Above the blackboard were some rods of the thickness of one's forefinger, kept there for the dual purpose of pointing to the lessons and flogging offenders. From time to time as the supply diminished through use or accident, one of the bigger boys of the school was sent to the woods near

by to select and bring back three or more of these school necessities, of the prescribed type.

D'Arey Conyers had been such an emissary on more than one occasion; indeed the irony of his present situation was due to his having been the bringer in of the supply now on hand, three of which were still above the blackboard, the fourth in the hands of his teacher. Miss Susanna Waring as she waited for the other pupils to clear the school grew pale in the extremity of her rage and stood ready to set upon her victim furiously.

Instantly the door was shut she gripped D'Arey by the shirt sleeve (for boys wore no coats in the hot summer days in Danford School) with her left hand, and with her right brought down the rod across his shoulders; then she gave utterance to her famous declaration, "I'll thrash you while I can stand over you." Next she began her favorite swinging movement in which, fixing her own heels tightly on the floor, she swung round and round taking the culprit with her and showering him with cuts from her merciless rod.

D'Arey's schoolmates, as they went slowly and sadly away heard the furore which all this created in the little school-house—the ejaculations, the sputterings, the sounds of the swishing rod, and the tramping of feet on the rickety floor. They had received the command however, to go at once, and there was little tendency on their part to linger, knowing that D'Arey would not be killed in any case, though his punishment gave every promise of severity, and realizing that disobedience was certain to bring them into a like un-

comfortable predicament the following day. So they departed with heavy hearts, each his own way, and the victim was left to his fate—the fate of many a lad who yet remembers Danford School, and even the little black school marm, with a measure of genuine gratitude.

As for D'Arcy the devil of resentment entered into his soul and dwelt there breeding evil for the days to come.

CHAPTER III

AT THE BREAK OF DAY

D'ARCY put foot out of doors very early one morning, yawned, stretched his arms far above his head, gave a whistle to start the dog from his lair, and moved lazily away in the grey light. A moment later his bright-faced collie came bounding after him. The objective of their morning walk was the dewy pasture field, where the cows lay rounding off the night of sleep.

It was a daily task of D'Arcy's to bring in the herd of milkers and one which by no means appealed to him.

"Bed is never so nice as at daylight," said he to himself many a time on these morning tramps, and thought it many another.

And so it was in a sleepy and perfunctory manner that this restless young soul went forth in the early dawn to perform his loveless duty. But duty was a big word with the master of "Ballymahon", Mr. Peter Conyers, and in consequence those under his roof were not in the habit of faltering even when the work assigned them was not to their liking; it had to be done, and there was an end of the matter.

Without question, therefore, D'Arcy, now in his fourteenth year, set out while the day was break-

ing and slouched along in a half disgruntled mood, scarcely sensible that the world was waking about him and as heedless of it as he well could be.

But he must indeed be a dull-minded youth who could quite escape the magic of the dawns at Danford. They were full of wonder every day of the year, be the season this or that, the weather fair or foul. When, however, as in this instance, it was a day in June, the queen of all the months in this north land, its dawn was replete with quivering beauty and sweet subtle influences magnetizing the most imprisoned soul of youth, man, or maid.

There was not a movement in the air at this hour, nor a sound that could stir the listening nerves. About the dark and motionless trees along the fences, the steely first light was chasing the lingering clouds of night, and there was such a flitting going on among them that D'Arcy's eyes must needs blink and blink in sheer bewilderment. It was still so early that the whip-poor-will was the only bird whose voice was raised in greeting to the dawn.

"Hey", grunted D'Arcy, "Hey! At it again, are you? Whip poor Will and get done with it, why don't you! You began shouting about it at dusk last night and here you are again hollering out your threats with the first blink of day! When do you get in your sleep, old noise-maker? I'd go to bed if I were you!"

And as though some magic influence were in his words, they were scarcely uttered when the bird fell into silence for the day.

Beyond what could be seen of the clearing there

was a remanent of forest where night still reigned defiantly, and then, the pasture, lying close-in at the mountain's base.

Towards this fringe of bush led a narrow lane, highly fenced on either side; and D'Arcy was slowly walking down it when, suddenly, his dog sniffed, gave forth a great yelp, leaped the fence on the right, and, with head and tail down, put off, leaving a streak of dark behind him where the dew was dashed away from the long grass.

Springing to the rail-top D'Arcy caught sight of a fleeing red fox, racing for the woods on the hillside, while his pursuer, with longer strides, was closing in upon him. However, as the covert of the forest was near, and the light imperfect, both dog and fox were soon lost to view, and only an occasional bark on the mountain slope amongst the trees gave any clue to the direction the chase was taking. D'Arcy meanwhile, resumed his walk in a gait somewhat more sprightly.

Now from out the damp woodland came the first sweet notes of the thrush—low, soft, enchanting. It was but a moment later when a sparrow twittered, and ere a breath had come and gone, a fellow of his gave forth a longer fuller ditty of the dawn. Then whether for vying or in response to some nobler emotion, thrush set to following thrush making a soft melody in all directions, while as yet morning was only in the grey. Soon they and the sparrows were chorusing to the waking world.

When D'Arcy reached the pasture field, the cows were still resting, and the dog having lost his

quarry, though he made a wide detour of the mountain side in search of it, was trotting towards the herd, his coat drenched with dew from the underbrush, and his tongue lolling out of his mouth. The field was dank green in the steely light, and the forest, in deeper darkness, environed it and was motionless.

D'Arcy whistled, gave a few buoyant calls, cast several stones in their direction, and the lazy cows began struggling to their feet and stretching themselves vigorously. A few more shouts from D'Arcy and a few more barks from the collie, and they were soon moving towards the outlet of the pasture while the bells clanged, dink-a-donk-dink, and the dog, trotting hither and thither, nipped at the heels of this laggard and that, making the still morning air about the hillside resound with his varied barks.

As D'Arcy pressed his lazy drove along the narrow roadway through the woods the sun lifted its glowing disk above the horizon, and filled patches of misty morning air among the trees with dust of red and gold. The meadow fields, in the clearer light, were jewel decked with dew-drops, and were already greeting the goddess of the morning with enchanting odors. The fences by the lane were still very dark with the dampness that night had dropped upon them, though here and there were patches faintly silvered with the light. And the sparrows, unpretentious little birds in their dress of homely grey, never content to live quite apart from man, yet ever fearful of too great intimacy with him, kept flitting down the

lane before the cattle and halting betimes to sing from panel and fence post.

As the pleasant little journey proceeded, the farm buildings came in view, an irregular pile of black against the morning light. The cows in the narrow lane before D'Arcy moved slowly on, dinging their bells and cropping now and then a patch of dewy grass. To the right was a meadow fragrant and rich in colour; on the left, the flat field where the ewes attended by their lambkins were nibbling their breakfast and bleating at intervals the pleading call of authority to their young; and beyond the flock, the school house stood by its white rock in the red dawn of the day.

Hideous as were the memories which that school suggested to D'Arcy's mind, it yet appealed to him as the one hope of escape from a life which however prosperous and beautiful it might be for others must be to him one of drudgery and loneliness.

"Mother is right," he said to himself, "and Dad is right; I must go to school. But why here? Why to this? By the 'thunderin' tappy' if she tries that rod on me again, I'll smash it and fling it out of the door."

The herd having covered the intervening distance during this soliloquy, now drew near to the buildings. Some of them were for entering the open gate of the farm yard to stand ready for milking, while others were bent on rushing down the pathway to the drinking place at the lakeside, when suddenly, to D'Arcy's surprise, his Uncle leaped into the way before them and gave the lad

a hand in driving the stupid creatures within the enclosure.

D'Arcy divined the purpose of his uncle's unexpected appearance and was set on making off to breakfast without a moment's delay, but turning aside from the fastening of the gate, Mr. Conyers greeted him thus, "Well, D'Arcy, how did you get on this morning? No trouble, I suppose."

"Nothing wrong Uncle—they are all here I think—and I am mighty hungry."

At normal times the lad looking into his Uncle's face would have related with animation every detail of the dog and fox episode. This morning, however, he was silent on this and all other subjects, so anxious was he to escape an interview on the question of his conflict with Miss Waring. But his hopes and efforts were in vain, for as he turned quickly to depart Mr. Conyers called to him and said, "I heard of the trouble you had with the teacher a few days ago, D'Arcy, and I want to say a word to you about it."

"D'Arcy turned at once to listen," saying, "Yes, Uncle?"

Mr. Conyers now came near his nephew and said, "Be careful my lad, be on your guard, stick to your books. Don't let this change your mind. Many a time your grandfather gave us boys a sore back for not studying. We did not learn much but that little has stood us in good stead. He was our only teacher you know. Miss Waring can't hurt a chap like you, D'Arcy."

"Uncle," said he, looking straight at him, "she'll never touch me again."

"Now D'Arey, now D'Arey, what if she does! Stick to your books boy, she won't kill you, get your education. Ah, but I wish I'd had your chance. I would not be here to-day!"

"Well Uncle, I'll go back—but by the Jiminey Christmas——"

"Now D'Arey—now D'Arey," said Mr. Conyers laying his hand on the lad's shoulder, "don't be hasty. Endure it and you will win out. And never mind such expressions as 'Jiminey Christmas'—you can get on without them."

The lad looked up at his uncle again and faced him squarely; his countenance changed from gloom to brightness and both broke into joyous laughter.

"All right, Uncle," said D'Arey, "I'll try it again but by the 'Jinney Lyn', he added shaking his boyish fist——

"Uncle, I saw a fox this morning—Collie there, gave him the run of his life."

"Never mind the fox, just don't forget what I have told you. Don't lose your chance in life for a mere trifle like a sore back."

"A mere trifle, Uncle! By George, it's a sore trifle!"

With this last word D'Arey turned about and went whistling to breakfast, feeling the better for having encountered his Uncle Peter.

Porridge was steaming on the table when he entered the kitchen and there was an abundance of delicious bread and butter, cut and ready. D'Arey threw off his straw hat and sat down at once, whereupon his aunt called out to him,

“D’Arcy run and wash your hands, you dirty boy!”

“O by jiminey, I suppose I’d better.” It was not a very thorough cleansing they received, and in a moment he had returned and was seated again at the table devouring his porridge ravenously, meanwhile wildly endeavoring to interest his busy aunt in the dog and fox story.

Through the open window behind him the lake sent up its freshness and the sun poured in its rays, wrapping the healthful youth in a two-fold benediction.

CHAPTER IV

BALLYMAHON AND THE CLICK OF THE ROW-LOCK

THE home of Mr. Peter Conyers was called "Ballymahon" to remind him of the place of his boyhood in Ireland. The lines of the house gave little pleasure to the eye, but it was of substantial workmanship and aroused a feeling of comfort in the beholder. One would scarcely say it was constructed, rather he would remark, "it grew". Such indeed was the case for it had expanded here and there to meet the needs of the occupants and conform to the rising fortunes of its owner. In a word it was an expression of family history, and Mrs. Conyers told many a story of events associated with this section or that and related incidents about the making of each addition to it: "This was our house when we were first married," she would say; "John was born in that room there, and Rebecca in this. Many a night I rocked the cradle here by this stove and knitted at the same time; and the first church services were held in this room by the Rev. Ross Brown—a fine man he was, too—a gentleman. When Tom was born we put up this part, and finally we had to make it as large as it is now."

And many a time good Mrs. Conyers shed tears over the sad sweet thought of struggle and of

love in days before the silver came in her hair or the stoop to her shoulders.

The building was commodious. It had many rooms, and home-made comforts in every one. The morning sun fell on the back of it which was towards the lake and the evening sun on the front which looked towards the mountain. The cool breezes from the water and the winds which came down from the forest and the hills, laden with the fragrant odour of the pines, met and played about it, yea blew in through its open windows carrying blessings to the family.

Remote from the thoroughfares and marts of the world, Mr. Peter Conyers dwelt here; one of those strong true men, of whom, thank God, Canada has been given so many in her lonely places, making for themselves small fortunes, blessing the community meanwhile and imparting without conscious effort the enriching qualities of their own sound characters to the national life.

Some men are born gentlemen; Peter Conyers was one of these. Not that he ever thought of arrogating to himself this high claim; to him it was enough if he might be thought a man, never divining in his simple philosophy, that herein is the first mark of a gentleman, without which the possession of all other qualities leaves one an empty humbug. When the question came up at table as to who might be properly termed a gentleman, he curtly remarked, "You had better leave that to the clergyman, there is a gentleman."

Mr. Conyers saw and would have his household see in the very eyes of Mr. Battershall those high

gifts of soul, which are nought but God in man, and alone give to their possessor the right to be designated and written down a gentleman. The fine countenance, the rich voice, the sweet way of speaking common words, the kindly watchfulness over the tender concerns of others, the beautiful readiness to treat nobly every one about him, save the coarse man and the pretentious woman: these qualities, possessed so richly by the missionary marked him in the penetrating eyes of Mr. Peter Conyers, "a real gentleman", whom his own sound instincts led him to honour.

Mr. Conyers though a man of the forest, seemed, because of his own adherence to reality, always clothed with strength. He did not know it was going forth, but others felt it if he passed or drew near, or spoke to them—even the sound of his name carried an undertone of moral magic with it.

He was a tall man with full beard, and though his features were somewhat roughly cast, they were redeemed from ugliness by an alert eye and penetrating glance which one saw on first meeting him and thought no further of less attractive features. His mind was found to be clear and large by those who talked with him, which of course many did, for the very reason, that what they puzzled over he saw clearly and looked upon without fear: in fact it was this fearless looking that brought him at once to the heart of many a serious problem and gave him the thread-end of many a tangled skein. There was something about him which made the rough man give up his swearing:

and as for the telling of foul stories in his presence, or relating sharp deed of business, he would only say, "Ah! Ah!" and the whole fabrication fell about the teller's ears and crushed him with it.

Such was the man who on a certain pleasant Sunday afternoon in July walked side by side with the Rev. John Battershall on the yellow sand by the blue waters of the Danford, chatting on many topics of common interest. To the superficial eye no two men could be more diverse, but in the realities of life there was a great oneness, and each was deep in the other's affection and high in the other's esteem.

"The school is the problem, Mr. Battershall," said Mr. Conyers.

"I quite agree with you Mr. Conyers, the school next to the home. The old Church is right there, she is the friend of education. The mind was made to be free and if it is bound, the whole man is in slavery."

"Well enough to be right in that way but what does she do? Here I am in this back woods. I have tried to get a teacher from the Bishop, and have failed. Well, I would not say failed exactly, but—poor teachers they have been, the most of them. Miss Waring has her faults but she is the best of them so far; she teaches them something—knocks it in with a stick when she can't do it otherwise, I am afraid."

Mr. Peter Conyers laughed, the clergyman laughed too and replied, "O let me tell you Mr. Conyers, an amusing incident about D'Arcy which occurred some weeks ago when I was inspecting

the school. You may have heard it but it will do no harm to tell it again in any case."

"I was standing beside the teacher, dear old body, when she called up the big boys that I might test them in mental arithmetic. D'Arcy was among them of course, and it happened that as he stood before us his head came directly under the stove-pipe. The ceiling is low as you are aware and the pipe was only two inches above his head. I was watching the monkey out of the corner of my eye. He rose gently on tip toes, pressed his head against the pipe and the blessed thing came down with a clatter, scattering soot all over the place. Miss Waring was in a high state of excitement, but I really do not think she knew how the thing occurred, and of course I said nothing."

"Oh, she would blame D'Arcy in any case," interjected Mr. Conyers.

Both men laughed heartily at the misdemeanour and then fell to talking over the more serious aspect of it. In the course of which conversation Mr. Conyers remarked, "He is a problem, that D'Arcy! I like the lad, he is very bright, but shortly after he came to the school, two years ago, Miss Waring gave him a terrible thrashing and he has been leading her a dance ever since. She hurt his pride, and I am afraid of the consequences. He told me at the time that he would not submit again."

"I must have a chat with D'Arcy," said Mr. Battershall, "He is to be confirmed next year and that will give me an opportunity."

“He has a mind as quick as a steel trap,” said Mr. Conyers, “but he is a strange mixture.”

“He needs a man to handle him” the minister remarked.

“Now you have touched the point,” Mr. Conyers replied. “The old soldier was the master for him!”

“To whom do you refer, Mr. Conyers? I have not heard of this old soldier.”

“Oh, indeed! He was before your time. He was our first teacher—a right old warrior he was; a fighter in the Crimea and afterwards in the American War. I got him a pension from the American Government and he was so grateful that he undertook the school for a time. Mr. Nesbitt your predecessor regarded him as a scholar; he was certainly well informed on things in general; and what an athlete! He did that for the boys at least; he taught them the game. It was a sight to see him bat and bowl even if he had one knee-cap blown off. But he ruled with a rod of iron. Of course as I say he also played with the boys.”

“Indeed,” said Mr. Battershall, I had not heard of him. What has become of him?”

“I really could not say. He was a rolling stone and one day in a huff left the place and we could never get any trace of him. The boys were delighted, because for many months there was no school at all.”

While this conversation was in progress between the gentleman of the forest and his clergyman, each growing every moment in admiration

of his companion, the other members of the household were variously employed.

It was Sunday afternoon, and, consequently there was release from ordinary tasks for everybody, except Mrs. Conyers and the servants on whom fell the labours of the dining room and the kitchen. And one may remark, what sacrifice is here for others, and how little these menial concerns are recognized in their true light, and how inadequately are they rewarded! But Mrs. Conyers, good soul, had joy on her dear face in making ready for the evening meal, and the servants caught her spirit and rejoiced with her.

As for D'Arcy he was nowhere to be seen, for he had gone cherry picking to a quiet part of the lakeside, and having satisfied his appetite he glanced about, and seeing no one undid the fastening of the boat, pushed it out on the quietly leaping water and rowed away along the wooded shores, thus violating one of the sacred laws of Ballymahon. No one saw the unlawful occurrence and it might never have been recorded had not the oar slipped in the rowlock and the sound of the click travelling along the curving shore reached the quick ears of Mr. Peter Conyers.

As for the rest of the family they had gone berry picking. This was a common pastime for the younger members of Ballymahon on Sunday afternoons; not that berries might be gathered for preserving—the religious atmosphere of the place would not permit of this—but young people might go afield and eat as many as they would—and for that matter very many more than could be sanc-

tioned by the strict rule of the Church or even by the laws of health. But Lent was far away and the desire of the moment laughed into silence the milder claims of health. So abroad they went, the young ladies of the place; Uildah the eldest, as quick on her feet as a March hare and as full of laughter and jollity as could be; May, the second daughter of the house, a chubby lass with sweet and winsome face, quiet smile, long fair hair streaming, and soft voice, not often heard—but once heard, never forgotten; and the minister's daughter Eugenie Battershall who was fond of driving with her father and had come to spend a few days in the comfortable home of Mr. Peter Conyers.

When this little party of berry pickers entered the great meadow field that Sunday afternoon it was in all its glory and spread away to the bare hill, the wooded height and the rosy west. The tallest grasses were swaying in the breeze and casting their fluffy brown flowers to the winds; the clover tops were grouped here and there in red patches among the moving grasses, and there was a blending of odours like that which must have delighted the first two lovers in far-off Eden.

The young ladies went chatting and laughing about, and tip-toed here and there lest they should trample down the hay and so incur the wrath of the mowers who next day were expected to begin the cutting. They crouched down among the moving grasses to seek the berries; they rose again betimes to call out to each other on the joys of the

festivity and to exclaim with delight on the finding of a sparrow's nest.

And so it happened that once, when Eugenie with a goodly cluster of wild strawberries drooping from their stems, rose up and stood erect above the moving meadow she was the only member of the company to be seen by D'Arcy who was making a wide detour by way of hiding the fact that he had been on the forbidden lake. He did not expect to see Eugenie, or any one else for that matter, but there she stood in her white frock with blue sash, holding the strawberries in her hand, tossing away her black ringlets with a shake of her head and calling out to her companions to behold her discovery. D'Arcy leaped to the fence rail and shouted at the top of his voice, "Hey! Get out of the meadow!" and disappeared like a jack-in-the box.

All were up from the grass in an instant but D'Arcy was nowhere to be seen.

"It's that rascal of a D'Arcy!" Hildah exclaimed.

"What in the world has become of him? Did the earth swallow him up?" enquired Eugenie.

She had seen him as he disappeared over the fence and said so to May as she came near to display her berries. "These are for Dad," said she, holding up the bunch by the slender stems, herself a picture of innocent delight and radiant beauty, touching berry after berry with the tips of her own pretty fingers and exclaiming, "They are for Dad—he has a tooth for strawberries."

Hilda stood looking at her in wrapt admiration. What eyes, what curls, what radiance of countenance, what rapturous absorption in the wild strawberry and the joy of gathering them for "Dad"! Every eye was now upon her countenance—all lips parted and ready to sing her praises.

All about the little party and far extending, was the rich meadow; where every daisy was showing the fulness of its beauty and every buttercup bowing its head to the breezes; and ever the clover went on breathing, the sunlight kept on falling; the gentle winds were making gentler music; and the little grey sparrows on the fence rail never wearied of their singing.

CHAPTER V

“D’ARCY CONYERS, HOLD OUT YOUR HAND!”

IT might have been expected that D’Arcy would have left the school at Danford in consequence of the experience which befell him, as related in a former chapter: or that, his father stirred to indignation, and his mother melted to sympathetic tears, would have withdrawn the tender youth to the care of their own home by the Gattineau.

This however, was not deemed the part of wisdom; for D’Arcy must be educated somewhere, and to send him to the River-Side School after what befell him at the hands of Miss Waring—how could it be done without making him an object of derision to all his fellows? Indeed, to be quite frank in the matter, his removal was never seriously considered, for the flogging of a boy in the schools of that day was of common occurrence, giving no surprise at any time, and arousing but little resentment. On the contrary it was looked upon both by parents and teachers as a salutary if painful experience in training the young for the battle of life.

And so D’Arcy continued at the Danford school for many days and months to come. It is to be regretted, however, even if it is not to be wondered

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at, that resentment entered his soul and that he made up his mind in consequence, to give the little black dame an interesting time during his continuance under her sway.

As days went by, D'Arcy indulged in many minor misdemeanours, few of which were sufficient to justify the use of the rod. Greater troubles, the watchful teacher often failed to trace to their proper source. Thus D'Arcy acquired skill in making himself a nuisance to one who had both the ability and the desire to confer benefit upon him. At the same time he was giving himself a thorough training in the dangerous art of promoting small wrongs and concealing them behind a non-committal face; soon also he became an adept in defending himself by the free and ready use of a double tongue.

For many months things ran on thus; growing suspicion on the part of the irritated teacher and on the part of D'Arcy ever increasing success in committing small crimes that remained undetected, till at length matters came to a head in an unexpected manner.

The circumstances of the affair as D'Arcy's schoolmates related them, for the whole school witnessed the scene, are in the main as follows.

The little black dame was in the habit of delighting her appetite with a cool draft of fresh buttermilk from the dairy kept by Mrs. Peter Conyers near the lakeside. The days on which the precious liquid was obtainable were well watched and remembered by the keen little dispenser of wisdom's ways, and it was her habit, at the right moment,

to dispatch one of the boys of the school to bring her a pitcher of the much longed-for beverage.

Now it so happened one fine morning after winter had passed and summer had come again to the fields and hills about the Danford that D'Arcy was given the honor of performing this special duty for his teacher. Miss Waring smiled upon him when he left, and most graciously did she receive him when he returned, bearing the pitcher in his hands.

Forthwith, all heads were lifted from books and slates, all eyes turned towards the happy teacher, all hearts were envious of D'Arcy who had been able to escape from study for so long a period. But even this semblance of amusement could not be tolerated in the halls of learning, so the little black face took on its accustomed frown and the command went forth, "Go on with your work!"

At once silence fell again, save for the murmuring of voices in reading, and the incessant screeching and tapping of pencils on slates. It was but the ominous calm which often precedes the storm, for suddenly a disturbance broke out which made every little soul leap to every little pair of eyes. Splash! went the pitcher of buttermilk on the floor; the little black teacher leaped towards the ceiling as the chair flew from under her, every lineament of her face and neck enlarged themselves, her eyes shot fire, her lips sputtered disgust and vengeance and her whole bearing assumed the aspect of fury. Even D'Arcy and the other boys, who had come to discount her powers of execution, were on this occasion startled some-

what, for never before had they seen such emotion mirrored in the little black features.

What had happened was the one question which in the innocence of their hearts every pupil now asked of his neighbor. What would happen to some one was a question of more serious moment as D'Arcy well knew. Not a pupil in the school accused himself of aught that could have occasioned the tempest; for not one was guilty, least of all did D'Arcy suspect that he was to be the victim, having just brought in the buttermilk, and having received in consequence the most marked assurance of his teacher's favour. Fancy his astonishment therefore, when, grasping the ruler, the teacher dashed across the room towards him and literally screeched, “D'Arcy Conyers, hold out your hand!”

He leaped to his feet and tried to protest his innocence. It was in vain that he essayed to calm the teacher's rage—she would allow no time for parley, and raising the ruler high over her shoulder she threatened to bring it down upon his head unless his hand were out in a moment. And D'Arcy did thrust it out but the hand was clenched and the knuckles turned to receive the blow. Instantly the flat ruler fell with fierceness and broke and flew in splinters.

This brought a halt in the actual conflict — not that all weapons were disposed of, for there was a goodly supply of rods above the blackboard, but that the breaking of the much prized ruler opened the fountain of more tender feelings in Miss Waring; was it not a present given her by an

ardent admirer now among the blessed? Had he not made it indeed with his own dear hands? Miss Waring returned to her milk-stained corner, burst into tears, then into sobs, and soon all the little girls in the school were weeping with her; of the boys some were chuckling with delight, others calling her a variety of pungent names, and all wondering what silly notion could have entered the poor woman's mind; but D'Arcy Conyers, white with rage and having an exceedingly sore hand rose from his seat, went to the hat rack in the corner, put his old home made straw hat upon his head, and in spite of the tearful protests of Miss Waring walked out with bitter feelings in his soul.

And now we must learn what it was all about; and here it is, as authoritative history records it.

Little bubbles massed together and floating on the surface of the buttermilk were the innocent occasion of all this unhappy outburst—such is the state of minds infected by suspicion. “Could it be?” thought the teacher: “Yes it might well be that he had mixed some dreadful thing with the milk. For that rascal of a D'Arcy is capable of anything!” With the thought, poor Miss Waring's rage flared up and burst forth in vengeance on one who was as innocent as could be concerning the matter.

CHAPTER VI

WHITE HAIRS AND BLACK RINGLETS

AN aged man, whom the children of the school called "White Hairs" because of the long silky white locks which covered his head and fell down about his ears and collar, the grandfather of young D'Arcy Conyers, sat one summer day in his usual place on a rough seat in the shadow of some birch trees and looked comfortably down the steep bank upon the lake chopping its green waters playfully. Beyond the rippling blue expanse his eye ranged carelessly on the forest, where an occasional green pine stood erect and clearly visible amid the thousands of its dead companions, White Hairs' clay pipe was laid aside, and his hands, one upon the other were resting on his stick. His head was uncovered, for the day was warm, and the wind from the lake played with his silver hair and soothed his wrinkled face. In the trees above his head there was a steady rustling of the leaves and a moving of the branches while from the lake-edge there came up the soft intermittent sounds of wavelets breaking over yellow sands.

The old gentleman was in good health and spirits having neither a pain nor ache, as he often said, to rack his frame, nor concerns financial or

otherwise to worry about. He had been a common sense man for most of his life, as he used to say, by which he meant one who had given place to religion in his youthful days, and, as a consequence was now in quiet possession of the truth which adds lustre to the close of the present life. Why should he not be happy? Why not on his face a calm, untroubled, and a joyous expression even when a smile is wanting?

Suddenly, amid the music of the leaves and the waves, came a thump—thump—thump to his ears, as of one running towards him down the hollow pathway from Ballymahon. It did not startle White Hairs for there were children in his son's household, as we have seen, and the school was not far away; yet he turned slowly about in his seat for the footsteps were firmer and sharper than those usually heard, and beheld D'Arcy approaching, with great strides and dressed in his best apparel.

The old man chuckled pleasurably as he broke forth, "Well, well, D'Arcy!" and stretched out his hands toward the lad saying, "So you are going to leave us." To which the boy bursting with youthful and joyous spirit replied, "Yes, Grandpa, I am going home in a few minutes. Uncle is now gone for the horses, and I came to say goodbye to you."

"Well now D'Arcy! We'll miss you. Your uncle will be a few minutes, so sit down here beside me and let's have a chat before you go, for after all we have been pretty good friends D'Arcy, you and Grandpa."

So, D'Arcy, a boy of fourteen sat down by the side of his grandfather. The young rascal had suggested the nickname, "White Hairs," and the grandfather very well knew it, yet the kindly sympathetic old gentleman having no memory for such offences looked fondly on the countenance of the lad and enquired, "Now D'Arcy, tell me, what are you going to be?"

"Oh I am going to do a clerk's job; that is if Dad can get me into one of the stores in the village, and then, well, some day I might get to town and go into a big store."

"You are going to do clerking, D'Arcy! Well now, let your old grandfather tell you that you did not understand his question. I did not ask you 'What you are going to do; D'Arcy, but quite another thing, 'What are you going to be?'" White Hairs laughed and drew the boy towards him with his arm, in the course of his last remark.

"Ah, you see what a difference a little word makes; 'do' is one thing, 'be' is another. You say you are going to do clerking and I say you are going to be a man."

"Oh, yes, Grandpa I see," assented the youth with a smile, and White Hairs continued, "You D'Arcy Conyers, you are going to be a man, that is what your old grandfather wants you to be; as to what you do that's for your own choice. Now don't ever forget this: 'It takes all your life to become a man.'"

"Why," said D'Arcy, "I'll be a man at twenty-one."

"Oh not a bit of it, not a bit of it, and you won't

be quite a man at seventy-one; I am still growing up," replied the old man chuckling with good nature and affection.

Then the smile faded from his face and he said, "Boy" (it was a custom of his to say 'Boy' very often rather than D'Arcy) "Boy", said White Hairs, looking towards the lake and drawing D'Arcy closer to him, "we part now, you and I. Grandfather is old and we shall not meet so often in future, and soon not at all; be patient therefore a moment while I speak to you. There is no hurry, uncle is not ready yet with the horses. Do you see the lake, D'Arcy?"

"I do, Grandpa," the lad replied.

"It is deep and rough and dangerous to the unwise," said White Hairs. "So is life itself. You are now anxious to begin your voyage; mine is at an end, the harbour of my rest is in sight. You are young, full of venture, yes, and reckless too, therefore let me impress this upon you! Life itself will welcome you, lure you, be a joy and glory to you, or she will rise up in wrath and smite you; she is never indifferent, you must make your choice of which you will have at her hands."

The old man knew enough of the youthful heart, and that of his grandson in particular, not to venture too far upon this line of advice, so he rose from his seat with astonishing vigour for one of his age, and stood before the lad, his silvery locks ruffling in the breeze, his face lighted with great kindness, and with penetrating eye he gazed into D'Arcy's face. Then he placed his hand on the boy's shoulder and spoke these words firmly and

with emotion, "God bless you, D'Arcy boy; and always remember the saying of the Great Book, 'One wise son makes glad his father, forty fools avail him not.'" He smiled again benignly and said, "Good-bye D'Arcy." And D'Arcy replied, "Good-bye Grandpa," and ran off quickly to stem his rising emotion.

White Hairs sat down once more and renewed his pipe for smoking, while D'Arcy disappeared over the hill. He prayed and smoked for a long time and the prayer and smoke went up together on this day and on many a day after. And though White Hairs' heart was heavy, his face was serene by which I choose to suggest much more than that it was merely calm; there was light and glory upon it as well as quiet.

"How passing strange," you say, "that it should be so! For if anything can trouble our minds it is the approach of our own life's end or the sight of youth entering upon the journey which we ourselves have travelled long and wearily. Is not the drawing near of death that which darkens man's visage and shows the deep lines of anxiety in his countenance? Was it not a very wise man who said, 'When a man thinks himself to be near death, fears and cares enter into his mind which he never had before'?"

Nevertheless, true it is that White Hairs' face was serene. There is a taper in the soul which may be lighted but only from the other side of death, and alight it was in the bosom of White Hairs and glowing brighter every day. Moreover, he was not concerned overmuch, but hopeful with respect to

his grandson's journey across the plain of life. "I have had experience," he would say, "I have lived, and this I can testify, that God's hand is always near, and when we least suspect, His grip is firm upon us. I repeat there is a string to every soul, and one end of it is in heaven: even in wrongdoing we can go only so far. There is a power which changes circumstances and defeats the inevitable."

Such was the speech of White Hairs, often repeated. Again he would say "I ripen, I do not grow old." And ripen he did, like fruit on the tree of life; beauty therefore had not fled away; it only changed.

When D'Arcy left White Hairs he ran up the hill toward the house in great haste, his face flushed with the blood of youth and his eyes beaming with the excitement both of leaving school and of returning to his home by the Gatineau. At present there was no place in his gleeful spirits for those sad emotions which usually rise at parting from friends and places, nor yet for the words of wisdom manfully dropped into his young mind by his grandfather. "This was what grandfathers are for," thought he (if it can be said that what passed over his mind was a thought at all) "to give boys unnecessary advice, and to reprimand them, and make them chore for them."

As he came to the crest of the hill and drew near the house, the sound of piano playing escaped through the open windows and floated towards him. "Was it Eugenie?" he enquired of himself, still running. As he approached more closely, the

quality of the music and the familiarity of the composition assured him that it was indeed Eugenie. He would like to have entered and seen her, but, boylike, he was shy and feared lest Aunt or cousin should see him and so bounded past the door; suddenly a thought occurred to him which might serve as an excuse for calling out at least to Eugenie. It was this: her home was near his own by the Gatineau, and no doubt she might have a message to send to her parents. Stirred by this generous impulse he turned quickly about and with several springing steps reached the open window, and thrusting his head through it he shouted, "Hello, Fiddle-diddle! Any message to send to your Dad?" The playing stopped, and Eugenie, startled by the sudden outburst behind her, jumped from the piano stool and cried out, "Oh, you little monkey, you scared the wits out of me!"

"I thought you might like to send a message to that dear old Dad of yours who thinks there is nobody like you in the world—if he were about Danford for a few weeks he'd change his mind. Anything to say?"

Then having feasted his eyes on her sweet girlish face as long as safety from observation would allow, he turned and fled, without getting any message whatever, and exclaiming as he ran off, "I'll tell them you are coming next week, or the week after that, or the week after that again."

He had gone only a little way, when another idea occurred to him and he turned again to run back and communicate it to Eugenie. As he turned he saw her head thrust out of the window and her

black ringlets falling about her beautiful face. He approached no nearer but only called out, "Eugenie take good care of Miss Waring!"

Again he turned and fled to where his uncle was awaiting his arrival, and leaping into the buggy beside him they drove off together, D'Arcy shouting 'good-bye', and waving his straw hat in the air in order to suppress deeper and more tender emotions; for he loved the lake, the woods and the life at Ballymahon and in his heart he was conscious of the first sweet stirrings of love for Eugenie.

CHAPTER VII

THE LEAPING BROOK-TROUT

ALL nature is alive, on a fine summer morning among the Gatineau Hills. It is, in my belief, no mere idle fancy, that once upon a time, and probably very often since, "the morning stars sang together," for very joy.

And so it came to pass that the Rev. John Battershall having waited for a certain morning in July with elation of spirits quite unusual even for him, greeted it when it dawned clear, by leaping out of bed with shouts and much commotion. Good Mrs. Battershall expostulated, the children were heard to groan in their disturbed sleep, the early stillness of the house was broken by the "thud, thud, thud" of the parson's bare feet, as, clad only in "robe de nuit", he strode down the uncarpeted hall to the room in which his friend and guest Mr. Benson of Montreal lay slumbering deeply, being weary from his journey of the day before.

"Thump! Thump! Thump! Thump!" The parson's hand fell heavily upon the sleeper's door without eliciting a sound. Violently then, Mr. Battershall turned the knob, entered and exclaimed, "Up Benson, up! The day is here Benson, the most perfect thing in nature you ever saw!

Now for the canoe; the Kazubazua, and the leaping trout!"

James Benson Esq., of Montreal was a lover of inland waters of every sort, but for the smaller lakes and the lesser streams he had a veritable passion. There was something in him which turned him aside from the big lakes and the open sea. They seemed too vast for the mind to dwell upon with pleasure, too unmanageable, they gave him a sensation of helplessness in their presence. Hence every year he betook himself to the lakes scattered through the Laurentian Hills and the streams which run singing down their valleys. And the mountains there he found not overwhelming by their very bigness, but well within his power to enjoy; and he found a seclusion among them which ministered to a certain longing in his bosom for loneliness.

Consequently although he was a man of large means he was seldom found at fashionable watering places; the great hotel, the long beach, and the tossing ocean had no charm for him and even when he went on a fishing trip into the Laurentians, it was rather to get abroad in nature than to catch and kill and eat. He found no delight in the slaughter. He had conquered the savage instinct for blood and found more pleasure in seeing the creature alive, than in standing over its dead carcass in beastly triumph. He was his own game warden and claimed that every man who carries rod or gun should be a protector, not a destroyer of nature's bounties.

In Rev. John Battershall the incumbent of

Aylwin, Mr. Benson found a man of kindred spirit. Their friendship was of long standing and deepened with the passing of years. Though both of them were natives of Montreal, they had not met till they stood side by side before the door of the boy's school at Lennoxville, from which lucky moment they were classmates, rivals in athletics and fellow members of the football team. Their chief attraction for each other, however, lay in a common love of the ways and sports of the river which lends a glory to the situation of the school. Yet of the two it must be said that Battershall's was the purer love of beauty, while the passion of Benson's soul was more for the sports which the out-of-doors gives to the buoyant youth and the man of of office life.

When Battershall was sent to Aylwin, one of the missions on the Gatineau, and found the endless charms of nature there, his thoughts fled at once to his old school fellow Benson, now a man of rising fortunes in Montreal, and of large means, inherited from his father and also acquired in the ways of business.

And Benson came at once on the invitation of his friend—and came every summer after—both for the joy of the place and the delights of a few days with Mr. Battershall and his canoe.

Mr. Battershall's outburst of excitement on the occasion in question is not therefore to be wondered at for when he awoke he recalled that Mr. Benson had come again and was in truth his guest at that very moment: and the morning long looked-for was even now spreading its rays over the hills,

over the shadowed forest, over the misty fields and turning the river by the parsonage to glittering silver.

Having breakfasted and fitted themselves out with much show of sportsmanship they were soon upon their way, D'Arcy driving them with his father's fine horses by special favour and for the purpose of doing honour to Mr. Benson.

"'D'Arcy my boy,'" said Mr. Benson, "'how have you been since I saw you a year ago?'"

"'Very well, Mr. Benson, thank you. We are glad to see you again.'"

"'I notice you still have those fine horses, and your Dad is as good as ever in lending them to us for the day.'"

"'Yes and D'Arcy to drive'" added Mr. Battershall. "'Fine hand you'd make of the reins Benson! Ha! Ha! In the ditch very soon; what do you think, D'Arcy?'"

With such words of pleasantry the little expedition set forward on its journey. The morning freshness was like magic upon them; the air, fragrant with the breath of things which grow unseen over vast tracts of plain and wooded hill, was enchanting; the converse of the two old friends, met again after many months, refreshed their souls, while ever flitting before their minds was the vision of the red canoe among the green alder-bushes by the amber stream.

At length D'Arcy reined in his horses, and turning aside from the travelled road entered upon a trail with great boulders. High bushes stood close in on either side of the road and kept up a dull

pattering upon the spokes as they turned past them. Soon they reached an opening in the woods (an abandoned camping ground) and just beyond it their eyes fell upon the stream flowing like molten amber; by the side of a bit of muddy path, they saw the red canoe bottom up as Mr. Battershall had left it, among the shrubbery.

Who that has ever known the thrill of the moment will put the question, "Is life worth living?" Is there generosity in the Most High?" No God but One who is essentially kind would surround man with such delights.

They were soon upon the stream. Benson took the bow that he might with the greater freedom cast for trout, when he so desired, and Battershall, that he might revel in the motion of the canoe itself and the glories of nature, chose the stern of the little craft.

As D'Arcy turned the horses and drove away to an appointed meeting place far down the stream, the canoe was pushed out into deeper water, and the parson remarked to his companion," A fine boy that D'Arcy! Would like to go to the city, detests the farm—asked me the other day if I thought you could help him in the matter."

"Very likely indeed, Battershall. How old is he now?"

"Fifteen, I think. He has a mind like a steel trap, but this country life is drudgery to him."

"Benson," said Mr. Battershall, as the canoe took the first bend of the stream under the gentle

pressure of their paddles, "this is one of life's supreme moments!"

* * * *

The day engendered silence in the voyagers; it was still, there was not even a rustling in the tree tops; it was very hot, though the sun was not yet at its highest point; misty clouds like the smoke of distant forest fires dimmed the horizon and veiled the mountain tops; through the leafage on the left of the stream, all the small creatures were in motion and finding the heat of the day very much to their liking, were busy making what music they could in happy response. On the right the lively sounds of the running mower at hay-cutting were audible though a distance off, and anon the shouts of the farmer ejaculating directions to his horses. There was no other sounds abroad; and there was no other motion save the flowing of the stream.

And so through the living quiet of the morning the canoe went softly upon the water over the amber sands where the impress of bygone wavelets linger, and spots of sunlight quiver, and long yellow grasses sway with the flowing of the stream.

Benson was smoking a cigarette, his rod beside him in the canoe, and the parson, without a word or even the sound of his skilful paddle, was guiding the red canoe into the deeper quiet of the forest, when, to the great joy of both men, a deer came to the forest-edge a bit down stream, and there the pretty creature stood and looked at them out of its great black eyes—so innocent, so honest

it was, and so gracefully and delicately formed. For a moment it seemed not to fear, then it turned quickly, gave one great puff of its nostrils, waved its white tail in the air, and bounded noiselessly into the deep woods; a little later it was seen upon a hillside among some white birch trees, where it stood for an instant or so, watching.

"It was a beauty! said Mr. Benson.

"Indeed it was! The woods are full of them hereabout and the fawns are with them at this season," replied Mr. Battershall.

"Benson! What ferns! Have you ever seen their equal for size and gracefulness? And what variety! Why I see——"

"I say Battershall, I have not come to catch ferns! Slow up here, this corner seems to me a likely place for a catch!"

"I don't think so, Benson, for I have tried often at this spot. Mostly chub or sucker!"

But Battershall, you can't fish, you know you can't—let's try the fly! And so saying he cast far ahead, where the dark and quiet pool began rippling again and to take on its amber colour. The fly had scarce touched the surface when it was caught with such splash and firmness, as promised well for the day's sport.

Just ahead there was a shaded spot where a submerged and sand-covered log came near the surface and ran for the greater part of the way across the stream, obstructing the free floating-down of slabs from the mills higher up, of the limbs of trees and other driftwood.

Benson, delighted with his first catch was for

lingering at this spot, but Battershall was for pushing on, finding his chief pleasure in the progress of the river itself, and being of the honest belief that the best fishing pool lay farther down, by the sand bank, in the deep woods, where a spring of fresh water bubbled up continually and flowed into the greater stream.

Suddenly the silence was broken by a loud "quack" "quack" and the splashing of wild ducks under the over-hanging bushes. It was but an instant later when one, then another, and a third, escaping from covert, fled with terrific force and low quacking round the bend of the river, and, rising high among the bystanding trees, were gone.

"Do you wonder, old man, that I am infatuated with this place?" enquired the Parson.

"Not in the slightest, Battershall; only I wonder that you are not more of a fisherman!"

"Make no mistake, Benson, I can catch, but I have no skill with the fly. I never practice the art for itself. If I fish, I fish to catch for the table, in which case it is simpler to use the worm or the grasshopper, or——"

He was interrupted by Benson exclaiming, "Oh, confound your business methods!"

"To be perfectly frank, Benson, I had rather see a trout dart through the shallow water and over the sandy bottom of this old Kazubazua than to see it dangling from my hook."

And so they chatted, and cast a line betimes as the red canoe went slipping noiselessly down a stream of many charms; dark where it runs deep,

the faintest yellow where it rises over sandbars, and always winding through the forest of ash and over spreading elms; now it passes a bit of beaver-meadow where a patch of silver water lies, and now a hill where a pine tree stands sweetening the air with its odours: and ever the ferns are drooping along the bank, and ever the flowers are reflecting themselves in the water, (spots of blue and red and clusters of fluffy white); and ever the birds are singing in the forest depths—the sparrow, the thrush and the robin; and the muskrat slips under the water to hide, and the mink peers out cautiously from his place in the bank.

So entrancing was it all that speech seemed out of keeping. Benson caught the spirit of his companion and spoke but little, and cast his line only once or twice in the distance of an hour's going.

It was Battershall whose state of mind impelled to silence and it was he who broke the kind of spell which had fallen upon them:

“We are near the spot, Benson, where the trout congregate; it is just beyond you, and I shall pull in here on the right.”

Benson made no reply, he only puffed his pipe with deeper satisfaction and got ready his line for action.

The pool, as Battershall called it, or, the fishing-place, as it was known to D'Arcy and the boys of the locality, was a dark and deep spot rather more in the middle of the stream than is usual on the Kazubazua. Before reaching it, the

water passes over a low-lying bar of yellow sand which rises gradually, and to the right protrudes above the surface to form a kind of landing place by the bank. Toward this well-known spot, Battershall now guided his canoe and presently came to rest. Just beyond this bit of sandbar a tiny silver brook, the product of many springs, comes flowing into the dark pool, and at its mouth the trout are wont to gather in great numbers.

On leaving the pool the stream becomes lively, making a current of some strength, and a rippling sound over many boulders. Here, too, the right bank is sandy and goes up with abruptness; the left is low and alder bushes droop to the very water's edge as though to catch the ripples, or listen to the happy murmuring of the stream.

"By the way," said Battershall, as he made fast his little craft so that his friend might fish from it with the more security, "I hear the rattle of D'Arcy's wagon. I expect him at this point for lunch."

"Things are going well then," Benson replied, and now for the fishing!" So saying he cast well down the pool. On the instant there was a leap, a flash of pink by the fly, and a racing off with the line; this side and that it went, bending the rod meanwhile to bowshape, now darting under the canoe, now down stream and back again; but the struggle was in vain, for the hook was fast, the line strong enough to hold, and the skill of Mr. Benson in handling it at least sufficient to put the issue of the combat beyond doubt. A speckled beauty, wriggling desperately, was lifted from the

water and dropped quickly into the canoe where for a time it made things lively with its hopeless efforts to regain the freedom of the water.

"I say, Battershall, this is worth my whole journey! Did you ever see such a beauty! One of the largest I have ever caught; but the sport of it! What a fighter!"

"There's D'Arcy on the sandbank yonder, waving to us," interjected Mr. Battershall. "He has made a good journey. How graceful those horses are, Benson. They see us too."

"Ah! Battershall, there's another!" Benson exclaimed as he quickly landed his second."

"Make it half a dozen, Benson, I can eat two and D'Arcy two, and you well—half a dozen. Oh, there you have another," exclaimed Battershall in a low voice."

As for Mr. Benson there was now wild delight in his very blood. "Just two more and we go, Battershall! I see D'Arcy is watching us; hungry I have no doubt."

"And he has a fire ready;" the parson replied, "the smoke is rising, I see it beyond the express wagon. Ah, and there he comes to get water for the tea. A fine boy, D'Arcy! Let's go and help him, the fishing will wait," and without another word the canoe was pushed back into the stream; and they crossed the pool and came to a landing by the boulder, beneath the sand bank where D'Arcy was standing with his bucket of water.

CHAPTER VIII.

A WAY OF ESCAPE

THE comfortable home of the S. Conyers family was near by the parsonage, and the welcome there for any friend of Mr. Battershall's was always cordial to a degree. Mr. Benson, after the first summer, became a guest of the kind Mrs. Conyers, who, though much burdened herself with irksome tasks, was yet very sensitive to the extra demands which a visitor at the parsonage, however considerate, was sure to make upon the strength of the delicate Mrs. Battershall.

As for Sam Conyers himself, it gave him no end of pleasure to air his opinions to such gentlemen as Mr. Benson and to pick up fresh ideas for his active mind to feast upon during the long and quiet evening hours of the winter.

Thus doubly welcome, Mr. Benson accepted frequently the hospitality offered him, and the guest room at the Conyers' home became known in time as "Mr. Benson's room," and by this name it is called "unto this day", as the Scripture has it.

And so it came to pass, one fine evening in summer, that a little group of congenial persons, of whom Mr. Benson was the central figure, sat on the verandah overlooking the garden and the field

in the valley below, and the river and the sun-touched mountains beyond it.

Mr. Benson was smoking a cigar, and next him on his left sat Sam Conyers with his pipe. Mrs. Conyers was in her rocking chair on Mr. Benson's right, slowly rocking and knitting; while before the little company sat Mr. Battershall. On the nearby steps descending to the lawn, D'Arcy placed himself; his eyes were turned towards his seniors, his ears were wide open and his whole countenance alive with interest. The other children were about in various positions and paying but little attention to what was going on.

Mrs. Conyers throughout the evening plied her needles with all diligence and strove betimes by knowing look and genial word to curb the loquacity of her husband who was bent on questioning Mr. Benson on every imaginable issue of politics and the outer world.

Mr. Battershall, like Mr. Conyers, and quite unlike his friend Mr. Benson, was gifted with great ease and fluency of speech in private conversation, though strangely enough this gift deserted him when in the pulpit where his utterances were always stilted though wise enough. Moreover, he was a gentleman of excellent information and more than once during the evening came to the support of the quiet Mr. Benson whose knowledge was rather of men and affairs of business than of books or politics.

"You must ask Mr. Battershall that question," Mr. Benson often replied, during the evening, to Mr. Conyers; "It is too much for me," he would

say, striking another match which when being applied to his pipe cast its brightness also upon his high forehead, sharp features and goodly brown moustache.

Everyone in the company was in the best of spirits for it was the end of another day of successful trout fishing on the Kazabazua, and consequently the outing, and Mrs. Conyer's bountiful supper afterwards, which Mr. Battershall designated "glorious", were the chief subjects of conversation. S. Conyers had many enquiries to make and often gave reminiscences of early days. "You know," said he, on one such occasion, shaking his dark brown beard and adjusting his pipe, "when I first came to this country. . . ."

D'Arcy still seated on the steps, was disrespectful enough to wink at Peter, his brother, for he knew what was coming, so often had he listened to the story before. Mr. Conyers, however, related old tales with all the freshness of new ones and was in no wise disconcerted by the inattention of his family or the small interruptions of others. As usual therefore he proceeded to tell, what was a substantially true story though slightly embellished, as was his habit.

"When I first came to this country," he repeated, "I was a young man then; (let me see, twenty, would it be Jane? I should think so; not twenty-one till the next spring, I think.) Well, however," continued he, stroking his beard again, and trying to get in a puff or two from his pipe between the words, "I used to catch them in dozens, yes in hundreds. None of your fancy hooks

and flies then, only a piece of fat pork or a frog's leg and any old rig for a hook. Pull them out! Well, it was a caution! Fast as I could throw in the line. That was by the mouth of the little creek, you know, just where it runs into the big one! By jiminey, they were whoppers! They like the sweet water of the little stream, you know."

Mr. Benson was now sufficiently well acquainted with the family and appreciative of Sam Conyers' strong qualities to have no hesitation in pronouncing such methods of fishing murderous. "No wonder that excellent stream is well-nigh fished out," which was unfortunately true as compared with the days of which S. Conyers spoke. "Enough to eat and no more is my rule; I never fish but once with the fellow who measures his day's sport by the number of his catch."

"Ha, Ha, Ha! Mr. Benson," exclaimed Mr. Conyers, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating and the test of the fisherman is his catch. Ha, Ha, Ha!" And again he stroked his beard, struck a match, lighted his pipe and was about to go on once more when his wife gently interrupted him, saying:

"Now Sam, you know you are talking of thirty years ago. You have not put a line in the creek since we were married." Dear woman, she wished both to defend her husband against Mr. Benson's accusation, and also to check him somewhat in his story telling.

Mr. Battershall then interposed to give the drift of things a turn to his liking.

"Benson," said he, "you are right and you are wrong. If you imagine that the country folk have robbed the stream and the lake you are wrong. But if"

"Now Battershall," interjected Mr. Benson, "where is your logic? I have said nothing of the kind; what I condemn is this murder, this wholesale catching, no matter who does it. Mr. Conyers speaks of times long ago when fish were in myriads and there were but few to catch them. That makes some difference. But speaking particularly of fishing for sport, no gentleman should be a member of a sportsmen's club unless its rules are such as to bind its members to protect, as well as permit them to catch."

"That's all right for you, Benson," said Mr. Battershall "unfortunately you are only one of the many who come up here fishing in season and out of season, on Sundays and every other day. Those are the sharks who have robbed the streams, slaughtered the partridge and are now after the deer. I tell you Benson there will be a rebellion here one of these days against such law-breakers and I will be the leader of it, if I hang for it."

"Hip, Hip, Hurrah!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "I'll get out the old muzzle loader and go with you."

At this show of temper on the part of Mr. Battershall there was much laughter among the company for he had leaped from his easy chair, so wrought up had he become over what he designated the mutilating of God's creation.

Mrs. Conyers smiled at the indignant man with a sweet quiet on her face, and Mr. Benson who

was ever placid said, "My dear Battershall, don't get excited, sit down, I pray you;" while Mr. Conyers and D'Arcy quite enjoyed the fight which the minister displayed now for the first time in their knowledge of him.

It was not more than a minute when Mr. Battershall smiled too, and then laughed aloud, for it dawned on him that after all, there were no perpetrators of the heinous crime against which he was inveighing, in the present company.

He proceeded then in a gentler tone. "You spoke of partridge, Benson. When I first came up the Gatineau in the eighties, they were to be met with on every by-path and open roadway, once you got beyond the fields."

"Yes, and about the fields also," interjected S. Conyers.

"Now they are seldom seen," went on Mr. Battershall, "for craven-hearted men have shot them, and others still more disgustingly selfish have shipped them to the hotels in Ottawa and Montreal to satisfy the pampered appetites of the rich. And the black duck and all the water birds once here in goodly numbers have been driven from our lakes and streams by the shot gun, the dog, and the self-styled sportsman."

"I used to see them in flocks," interrupted S. Conyers, who was now beginning to share the views of his visitors.

"Now they are after the deer and the moose," continued Mr. Battershall. "Man is the brute of brutes in his desire and his ability to kill. I abhor such fiendish work!"

"I quite agree with you Battershall," said Mr. Benson, adding, "if we care not for the lives of these harmless creatures, at least let us protect them as among our natural resources."

"Not only so Benson, we must save them for our boys and girls; are they to fish in mere wells and reservoirs, for our greed and carelessness; are they never to know the joy of a duck hunt or a partridge shoot, because we have been law breakers and gluttons?"

"There now, Battershall, you are getting excited again," exclaimed his old friend. And once more laughter leaped from lip to lip.

"The law, the law must be enforced," said Benson.

"O law! Benson, your law is useless. We must arouse public opinion and you people in the city have got to instill higher ideals into your so-called sportsmen."

D'Arcy's face sparkled with delight at this heated outbreak on the part of Mr. Battershall.

While this and many other topics were being discussed Mr. Conyers was impatiently waiting to get in a word on matters of great moment to his particular interest—the mines, the forests, and political issues before the country; and D'Arcy, joyous of countenance and observing every person and every word, was studying with all his concentrated powers the possibility of escaping from the labour of the country through the influence of Mr. Benson.

Suddenly and unobserved therefore, he rose and slipped away to talk the situation over with his

brothers. The first step of his plan was soon determined. He would speak again to Mr. Battershall whose fighting spirit had commended him afresh to the Conyers boys, and ask him if he would bring his case to the attention of Mr. Benson.

That night it was the whole subject of conversation among the lads, the moment before they fell upon their knees to say their prayers and the moment they rose again from them; yes, and for long after they had rolled into bed it absorbed the thought of D'Arey's quick and fertile brain, and even when he had fallen asleep it floated about all night in the airy spaces of his dreams.

CHAPTER IX

ST. JOHN'S IN THE WILDERNESS

NOT many days after the events just related, Mr. Samuel Conyers, his wife Jane, their two daughters, girls in their early teens, and Master D'Arcy Conyers, might have been seen on a beautiful July morning, entering the family vehicle, to which was attached a pair of glossy black horses in bright buckled harness, and setting off down the hill before the residence and across the little meadow, deeply green, ablaze with clover tops and redolent with mingling perfumes.

Before them the river glistened like a stream of rippled silver, deep set in the tender green of the foliage. On reaching its bank, the road turned suddenly and ran for a distance, with the meadow, the hillside and the mountain on one hand, and, on the other, the river sparkling through a fringe of young cedars and balsams. Soon it crossed a bridge of round cedar logs and disappeared in a bit of old Gatineau forest standing as it were to guard from bold intrusion the quiet of the Conyers' home.

S. Conyers, Esq., was a ruddy, plump-faced man, with blue eyes, black hair, and a long dark beard showing streaks of grey. He was not large of stature but roundly built and was well knit

together. His movements were quick, and his eyes alert; there was a "snap" folks said, in every turn of Sam Conyers. Moreover he was gifted with an easy flow of speech and always had something interesting to relate, for he read the weekly paper and observed and thought more than most men of his neighbourhood. While Sam Conyers would not give himself to telling an untruth about things, he frequently indulged his remarkable faculty for highly tinting the facts, which led Mrs. O'Brien, the postmistress to remark that, "a story never suffered a whit by Sam Conyers' tellin' of it."

Though his homestead was in a secluded corner of the countryside, (being shut in by the river and a bit of forest) so that he seldom saw his neighbours passing on the highway, yet his fancy had no such limited range. His productive imagination never left him without a group of admirers, or of persons who must be won to his state of mind, and many a speech for public benefit was delivered only to the unheeding fields and pastures.

When Sam drove abroad, as on the present occasion, he took his best pair of horses, and set them out in his silver buckled harness. He placed a new, tall, straight whip in the holder; not of course that Sam Conyers' "nags" ever required such a stimulus to their spirits, or that it was ever applied when folks were about—Oh no! Sam was too competent a horseman and too wise a player on the stage of life for this—and any slight tendency to dullness on the part of his drivers was carefully removed under cover of the little wood already

referred to, or at least at some safe distance from spectators. All that Sam's horses needed when fellows were about was a tight rein and a word from the owner's lips; this was enough to bring them into the village with heads and tails up and mud or dust, as the case might be, flying in the air behind them.

If Sam had a beast which he wished to sell or trade, as was often the case, it was always the one he could not part with at any price. "I'd rather part with every hoof on the place than Nance, or Billy, unless of course, I get my figure. Everything has its price you know!"

Since Mr. Conyers, possesses this very strong desire for appearing in a favorable light and for having a public to appear before, it is not in the least surprising that he drove out on this particular morning in July with every hair on his black horses brushed to glossiness, every buckle on his new silver mounted harness shining, every speck of mud carefully removed from the seat, box and wheels of his vehicle. In a word, on this the occasion of the Bishop's annual visit, things must be right so far as S. Conyers, Esq., could make them; for every one would be out to greet his lordship, and S. Conyers must appear to the best advantage.

No matter how separated, divided, and sectional a community is in the country parts of Canada, there are fortunately times and events which bring its scattered members together to share a joy, or a bereavement, or to join in some common function. If nothing rends asunder like religion

neither does anything create so strong a mystic bond between those whom it embraces. This mystic oneness is often called forth by the appearance of some great personality whose breadth of vision lifts him above party strife and whose sympathy makes him a member of all groups while yet he is an adherent of one in particular.

It was even so with Bishop Moorehouse. His annual visit to the Anglican Parishes on the Gatineau always fell in the same month, the early weeks of July, that period of comparative freedom for those who engage in husbandry on the hill slopes and in the rich valleys of the Laurentian country. And the date was fixed long before, not only on the Bishop's calendar and by the Anglican clergyman and the confirmation candidates, but by many others in the community as well, and it was looked forward to with eagerness by Christians of all denominations. Even French Roman Catholics hung out their flags; the Methodist parson closed his church, and his congregation went in a body to hear the Bishop; not a few followers of John Knox straggled in, if indeed with a considerable spirit of misgiving: "He was a grand man," they would say, "in spite of his Church, and his Popish garments; as for the Orangemen, their banner on which was emblazoned King William crossing the Boyne on his prancing charger, was flung to the breeze above their Lodge Room on the hill, by the Gatineau. In fact Bishop Moorehouse was not, in all the country side, designated the Anglican Bishop, but simply "the Bishop", and not infrequently "our Bishop". He was, in

deed, not the travelling organizer of a sect, but one who lived a great life, mighty in its freedom. Like most good men he was sweet, kind, fatherly, above controversy,—not so much a Bishop as a man. If ever a man was truly catholic it was he—so great his heart, so large his mind, and his spirit such a fount of generosity to lesser men! He was more spoken of for his face and voice than for his sermons. “Nothing in them”, more than one critic of his addresses truthfully averred, “nothing that is new, yet somehow, they are the breath of life for the people none the less.”

Often Bishop Moorehouse stayed at the parsonage on the river bank for a few days’ respite from travelling; and strive as he would to keep people away, Mr. Battershall could not do so. When the Bishop sat on the lawn at eventide the people would come to him—their day’s work over—clad in their best, to pay their respects and get his benediction, not official but personal.

It was then that the real man was revealed and the secret of his power appeared. The visitors would linger, but the Bishop was an observer of regular habit and he must retire at dusk, “Dark comes for rest, God curtains the sun,” he would say. “that our eyes may not open till refreshment has visited us; I to my travelling to-morrow, if God will, you, to your work, so let us part with prayer!” and there on the grass plot, facing the glory of the west, with his people standing about him, their heads bowed, prayer flowed from his mighty soul, while the river went softly by and the

birds sang with never ending delight their even-song.

It was therefore not to be wondered at, that even hoeing and weeding were suspended and preparations for hay-making given over, that the farmers on their lands small or great, might assemble for divine service when the Bishop came to the Gati-neau.

Even the Doctor found less occasion to go abroad on his work of mercy to the sick and of profit to himself. And Mrs. Swain took a sudden turn for the better and sat at her cottage door for three days in succession, hailing every passer-by and asking if he or she were going to see the "Beeshop" and would they give her a lift that way.

The School Trustees, though not all churchmen, and having little admiration for its dead forms, after long debate, decided to grant the children and the teachers a day off, that they might attend the services conducted by the Bishop and witness a Confirmation.

It was a matter, therefore, of no minor importance that attention should be given to all externals with which S. Conyers, Esq., had aught to do, when Bishop Moorehouse came to St. John's in the Wilderness, and all the settlement came out to greet him.

Hence from the moment that his carriage emerged from the grove which screened his house from common view, the journey to the Church was for Sam Conyers, to all intents and purposes, a veritable triumphal procession.

The Church of St. John in the Wilderness, be it said, stood at the top of a steep hill by the Gatineau road. It had a red roof then, and, for aught I know to the contrary, may have a red one still. Above it the blue summer sky was without a cloud, on the day of which we write; about it on every side lay the little churchyard and the soft green forest.

Those who built this lonely sanctuary gave it the very appropriate name, "The Church of St. John in the Wilderness". For a wilderness it surely was in those far off days and scarcely more than such is it still, for while the main road passes in front of it, no human habitation can be sighted from where it stands. It was only a red-roofed church on the green hillside in a forest of fir and pine and hemlock. To the wayfarers, and they were many then on the highways, it was a landmark on their journey. To some it was also a witness, being so constructed that no one could mistake it for anything but what it was, a house of prayer.

S. Conyers had already arrived when the Bishop's carriage rattled over the bridge and came slowly up the dusty hill on which the church was situated. The cedar fences on both sides of the road were lined with teams; men were chatting about in little groups; mothers wandered through the graveyard to enjoy the sweet solemnity which surrounds the country church; children, subdued somewhat by the spirit of the place walked about or clung to their mother's skirts, or picked wild flowers or wild strawberries among the grasses.

The bell rang out at the first sound of the Bishop's carriage on the bridge below the hill. Presently it came into full view. He was with Mr. Battershall, who drove his splendid bay mare with black mane and tail. Everybody about knew the "minister's horse—and his buggy also, for it rattled like a wagon, so shaken was it by the vicar's rapid driving over roads of every possible degree of roughness.

When it drew up before the entrance to the church, the men and boys about lifted their hats, while Mr. Sam Conyers was soon by the buggy side to greet the Bishop and carry his portman-teau to the vestry, talking respectfully the while to his "Lordship".

The sittings of the little edifice were already packed with worshippers and yet space must be found for the crowds who lingered in the open: chairs were therefore placed in the aisle, and benches in the vestibule so that the Bishop and clergyman reached the chancel with difficulty.

The candidates for confirmation were seated in the front pews, the boys on one side and the girls on the other in their white dresses. Two by two they knelt at the appointed time before the Bishop, to receive his benediction—first the girls in twos and then the boys in twos. It chanced, however, that one candidate was left for whom there was no companion—it was D'Arcy Conyers.

So he went forward alone as any other boy would have done; alone he knelt before the venerable man of God who laid his hands upon his head, and uttered these impressive words: "De-

fend, O Lord, this thy child with thy heavenly grace, that he may continue thine for ever; and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until he come unto thy everlasting kingdom. Amen."

D'Arcy Conyers, returning, showed signs of being deeply stirred. S. Conyers, Esq., cleared his throat with a degree of satisfaction thinking it no slight distinction that his son should have been presented alone and that people would say, "That's Sam Conyers' boy, D'Arcy, a fine lad, indeed." Jane Conyers wept silent tears of gratitude and prayed that a double portion of the blessing might come upon her boy.

CHAPTER X.

THE GATINEAU HILLS NO MORE

“**K**LICK! Klick! Klick!” dully sounded the hoe in the youthful hand of D’Arcy Conyers as it hit, and hit, and hit again on a stone that lay unseen in the rich soft potato ground. There was haste in his every movement and, strange to say, joy on his sun-browned and perspiring countenance.

“But why this joyous haste, D’Arcy?” said the Rev. John Battershall who suddenly appeared on the scene. “Are you not only sixteen years of age your next birthday? Boys of your age find potato hoeing a drudgery, do they not?”

“Yes, O yes, they do, a dull job, sir; but this day ends my hoeing, ing, ing, ing,” he grunted out, as he struck the rough instrument deeper into the ground and turned up the moist, yellowish soil beneath. “I am going to the city where fellows can stay in all day out of the sun, and have nothing to do but swing the pen.”

To which jubilant utterance, Mr. Battershall laughingly replied, “Well done, D’Arcy old man. Keep up your ambition, work hard and you will get on. And we must get on too, pet.” said he to his horse—pulling the lines meantime, and so drove off in his old rattling buggy to make a call

on one of his flock, while the strenuous and joyous youth with greater rapidity than ever, chopped away at the ground, drawing the fresh earth closer about the stalks of the tender young potato plants.

The sound of the hoeing entered in by an open door and fell on the ears of his mother, a woman whose life had not yet travelled more than half the span allotted happy mortals. She was seated in a low rocking chair, and plied her needle as quickly as her heavy heart would allow. Beside her, on the floor, lay a basket into which she dropped each article of her boy's apparel as it was finished.

Through the door the sunlight fell on the home-wrought carpet making it a veritable rug of gold; there was sunlight too on the rough board platform outside, and on the budding rose tree by its edge and on the green clumps of potato leaves, each on its little mound with the fresh earth about it, and on her D'Arey, hurrying to finish his task in heat and dust; and like a faint wash of gold the sunlight was on the fresh green fields, the passing river, and the forest trees quivering on the solid mountain ridge beyond its waters.

Mother-like, she had so placed her rocking chair and her basket that without interrupting her work she might lift her eyes at times and let them rest for an instant on her boy. Once she paused, however, in spite of her haste, to view him a little longer, for D'Arey Conyers was deep in his mother's heart—(what boy indeed is not?)—how deep, she herself scarcely realized till now he was almost on the eve of leaving home for the city; to her mind

and perhaps rightly so, the danger zone for a young life.

As she paused she spoke in low tones to herself, "Soon you will be where I cannot see you my boy; may God protect you, is your mother's prayer." Tears gathered and rolled down her cheeks, like big drops of liquid silver. She dried her eyes and resumed her mending for a moment, then dropped her hands and the work in them to her lap, and thought aloud once more:

"In that room he was born, on this lap he lay asleep, at these breasts he drank my life, while with every breath of his my prayers for him went up. Oh, more is he, than bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh—he is my life—Oh close him in, dear God, in thine arms; mine can no longer reach or shield him." Then resuming her stitching she composed herself with the thought, "This is the way of the world; it will give him a chance in life which his father had not; it is best for him I suppose," and with a touch of pride in her boy, "he is too bright a lad to bury in the woods; and Mr. Benson is a good man," she added as an after-thought.

Mrs. Conyers now rose up and with her work still in her hands, went through the door and out into the garden; she would speak to D'Arcy while she could.

The boy did not see his mother approaching, as his back was towards her, nor did her footsteps make any sound, so quiet was her treading on the soft earth. Moreover, D'Arcy's mind was far away in boyish day-dreams of the new life before

him, and she was by his side and spoke before he knew it.

"Hello, Mother!" he ejaculated with surprise.

"Don't work too hard, my boy; you are very hot. Here is a piece of cake to satisfy the wolf till dinner time. Come to the summer house while you eat it, and rest."

"The wolf, Mother? The whole howling pack of them you mean!" said he, wrinkling his hot and dusty face in a wide circling smile of delight as he received the cake, still hot from the oven.

They walked slowly side by side to the summer house which offered a cool retreat from the burning sun. It was a pleasant little bower, and, viewed from the platform before the house, was the chief object of beauty added to the landscape by human hands. The path from the platform to it, which D'Arcy and his mother gained after a step or two, was a dark brown strip of earth tramped hard and edged with flowers of various kinds and it came to an end by a red gate which opened into the meadows below. The summer house arched high above the gate in graceful curves of deep green hop vine, now thickly hung with clusters of lighter hue.

In it there were two rough settles, one on either side. Mrs. Conyers seated herself on one of these, D'Arcy took the other, and throwing his straw hat on the ground beside him, sat munching his cake and chatting freely of his going away, and the grand time he was sure to have.

His mother listened to this recitation of his boyish visions for a time, with a smile of delight,

for it pleased her even to hear his voice while she could.

Then she said: "Well, I have your things about ready; three pair of socks will be enough to take with you; I can knit you another by fall and send them on with your winter garments; your white starched shirt you will keep for Sundays and the linen collars also; the striped ones will do for other days."

Thus she directed her words to practical concerns, but her heart was bursting with emotions and burdened with advice she wished to impart to her boy ere he left her, but something restrained her; it was the best of wisdom to say but little, D'Arcy had no taste for much sound advice.

"My boy," she said after a pause, "I have done my best for you. The responsibility of life rests now on your young shoulders, but responsibility makes men, if borne faithfully, and you have a mother's prayers.

D'Arcy was touched for the moment, and his mother rising to go stepped towards him across the path, put her arm about his neck and said, "Always remember this, my boy, let it sink deep into your heart, you are ever in the eye of God, no matter what you do or where you are."

So saying she left him and returned to the house. D'Arcy went back to his work, deeply stirred by this show of love which was unusual in his mother. Not till then had he stopped to think that going away to the great city meant leaving her and the home surroundings of his boy-hood, and his young heart rose lump-like in his bosom and his eyes

dulled their vision with tears. How much a part of himself home was, began now to dawn on him, and he tasted the bitterest cup a boy ever knows till he loses his mother—that of leaving home for the first time.

For D'Arcy the experience might have passed without any pain but that his mother was endowed with beauty and the qualities of love. She was a tall woman with slightly rounded shoulders. In her young days she had been slim and graceful, but as years advanced she inclined to stoutness, and beauty of form gave way to the beauty and charm of motherliness. Her face was pale save where the tints of faded roses lingered on her cheeks. There were a few wrinkles on her forehead; but withal hers was a freshness of mien unusual in women of her years. Perhaps it was due to her eyes, so large, so brown, and so full of kindness, that the freshness of youth had not departed from her; in a measure it was due also to her hair so bronze-coloured, so luxuriant.

A broad high forehead was a feature of this good woman which could not be missed by the observer, and the parted hair and the curved nose. The mouth was perfect, not too large nor the lips too heavy; and the chin was formed with great delicacy of outline. To these natural features, so beautiful in themselves was given gentle pensiveness and kindly joy which made one feel the benignity of her presence and led not a few in the countryside to speak of her as “Mother Conyers.”

CHAPTER XI.

THE HOUSE WITH THE BRASS KNOCKER

THE house, in which lodgings had been taken for D'Arcy, had a heavy green door on its front entrance, and a brass knocker of ancient workmanship gleaming upon it. When first hung there the door was given a coating of brown stain to render more sensible to the eye the rich markings in the oak panels of which it was composed. But since the original owner of the place, a merchant of wealth, left this comfortable dwelling on McGill College Avenue for his little plot on the summit of Mount Royal, many years past, the door had been painted and re-painted times out of number, as tenant after tenant came, stayed a while, and went again on life's journey.

At the moment when it concerns us the door was green, dark green in colour with the coatings of paint rising in many a broken puff, and the street dust stored away in every crack and corner. The brass knocker was shining, indeed it was ever so, ever shining and ever brass; no matter how often the door changed its colour or the house its tenant and its owner, the glittering knocker was there to catch the eye and invite the hand of the wayfarer.

Over the door, to protect it from the falling snows of winter and the suns and rains of summer,

there stood a porch, with a flat roof projecting in the form of a semi-circle and supported by four doric pillars—wooden, hollow, and, like the door, green of colour.

The house itself was of considerable size, as one found on entering, though from without it appeared small enough in the long terrace in which it stood; and it had little to commend it to the eye, beyond its porch, its door and its brass knocker.

To certain passers in the street it might have also the attraction which age imparts though it was scarcely old enough to possess this charm: how indeed could it be in this upland section of the metropolis? Men are still active in the city's life who recall the days when gardens and orchards spread hereabout; when in open fields more than the poor man's cows wandered and cropped and dinged their bells as they chose; when there were rutty and stony roadways for streets; when paths winding under the maple trees and leading up the mountain side lured on the lover of exertion and of the open places.

Thus endowed with but little beauty of its own, and not possessing the dignity which age so often lends, the house with the brass knocker could nevertheless lay claim to one distinction, and this its present tenant was not slow to appreciate, and so emblazoned on the curving front of its green porch in letters of gold, "The Burnside", in proud memory of its rightful claim to stand near, if not on, the very spot once occupied by the home of that benevolent merchant who gave his fortune,

just one hundred years ago, to found the institution of higher learning which bears his name, and is of such honest pride to all her sons.

It was before the green door of "The Burnside" that D'Arcy Conyers now stood—his eyes fixed on the brass knocker, and his hand outstretched to grasp it. It is a fateful moment for him.

See! The door opens; he enters; it closes again behind him; the country youth steps from one life to another in crossing the threshold of "The Burnside."

Hat in one hand and his travelling bag in the other, D'Arcy was ushered by a pretty maid in cap and apron, into a little dark sitting room where she left him standing in the dim glow of the chandelier whereon only one gas jet was burning, while she, the little imp, with a smile on her pretty face at the sunburned countenance, the rough attire, and the awkward poise of the new guest, went to call the landlady of "The Burnside".

D'Arcy seated himself in one of the many strong, old-fashioned, haircloth chairs which crowded the apartment. He had been there but for a moment, however, when the curtain was brushed aside and in stepped the dignified head of the establishment. The young man struggled to his feet to greet her. She was a tall person, strongly built; her features were clear cut and her red face deeply furrowed; the eye was grey and penetrating, but kindly; her hair was very white and a spot of black lace rested on it like a crown. Mrs. Painter, for such was the good woman's name,

bore herself at first with considerable dignity, but on seeing the type of her visitor gave over all stiffness of manner and let her natural kindness light up her countenance, while she set her strong and well shaped mouth to uttering quick and hearty greetings to the boy from the hills of the Gatineau.

“Mr. Conyers, is it?”

“Yes, Mam, I am D'Arcy Conyers.”

“I am glad to see you,—D'Arcy, shall I call you? Mr. Benson spoke to me of you.”

“Yes Mam; I am to work for him.”

“And he took a room for you here, a nice little room it is. Sit down a moment till I make quite sure that it is ready and then I will take you to it.”

Mrs. Painter turned from her guest, stepped to the door, caught the white bell-knob and pulled it, sending a ringle, dingle, all over the house, and presently the pert little maid in white cap and apron appeared beneath the heavy red draperies, looking, as D'Arcy thought, the prettiest thing he had ever seen.

“Is the room on the top floor ready for Mr. Conyers?”

“Yes'm”, replied the maid, glancing at D'Arcy out of the corner of her roguish eye, and disappeared again while the generous-hearted Mrs. Painter led the way upstairs, talking all the time about the room, and how D'Arcy was sure to like the city, and what a superfine gentleman was Mr. Benson; thus giving D'Arcy no chance for a word, which was very much to his liking.

When three flights of stairs, each narrower and

darker than the other, had been ascended, the voluble, good-natured, motherly woman and her young guest stood in an attic-like compartment, with a window towards the heavens as the only means of light and ventilation. There was a moment's jingling of keys, and a turning of the lock after which the door was swung open, and D'Arcy was ushered into a little room against the roof, having a casement window which opened upon a "labyrinth" of back-yards and narrow lanes.

"The room is small, Mr. Conyers, but not uncomfortable; I think you will find everything nice," remarked Mrs. Painter with much kindness of manner and left the lad to settle himself in his cramped but exalted quarters.

"Thank you," said D'Arcy, "it will do very well indeed."

And D'Arcy felt himself more at ease, now he was alone and had therefore opportunity of getting his bearings; moreover, Mrs. Painter had been so kind and had given him such a hearty welcome.

It should be remarked that this big-hearted, motherly dame would have done as much for any new guest, but D'Arcy appealed specially to her sympathy, for he was from the country and many years ago she too had grown up on the happy hill-sides of Scotland. And moreover, Mr. Benson, who had commended D'Arcy to her care, was a gentleman whom she was anxious to please. Her interest in the young man was therefore very genuine. She had mothered many a boy in the days when she kept a small boarding house in La Chute—she would mother D'Arcy also, if he would

let her. D'Arcy Conyers, however, was the last of boys to feel himself in need of any such kindly offices.

It was late afternoon when D'Arcy took up his quarters at "The Burnside" and the evening meal came on within an hour. Dinner at night was new to him and seemed not a little ridiculous. When the bell rang, however, he went down at once for he was very hungry and entered the dining-room which seemed to him wondrously grand. He was given a place at one of the three long tables about which other guests were already seating themselves. Everyone glanced at poor D'Arcy, but addressed him never a word. He stubbed his toe on a mat; this embarrassed him and he blushed deeply. There was much conversation among the guests as the meal proceeded and occasional outbursts of laughter, but D'Arcy was silent and could scarcely resist the feeling that he was the subject of comment and ridicule. However, after not a little time had passed in this uncomfortable neglect, a well dressed, sharp-featured man with white hair, entered the dining-room; he looked at D'Arcy, said, "Good-evening," and passed on to his seat at another table. D'Arcy, in a voice so rough that it shocked his own ears replied, "Good-evening, sir," and these were the only words which came from his lips during the meal, except "Thank you," addressed to the pretty maid for everything she brought him.

And that little butterfly, whom he thought a model of beauty and neatness, threw him a glance and a faint smile from time to time, which betok-

ened her recognition of his country origin and thus added considerably to D'Arcy's sense of discomfort with his surroundings. For the first time in his life a wholesome sense of humility spread over him; and he could have wished himself anywhere else in the world.

At the earliest moment he rose, left the dining room where the lamps were shining brightly, and made his way up the dark stairs to his room against the roof where he stood at the open window and looked out; the long shadows of the night were filling the lanes, there was less darkness above the roofs of the houses, and on a distant street corner he saw the bright flashing of a lamp. After viewing the desolate scene for a moment, he turned about and threw himself into an old-fashioned chair made for comfort, but, like those in the little parlour, covered with hair-cloth in the interest of economy. For a time he sat there ruminating, then rose, went to the window again, sat upon the ledge and for the first time in his life looked upon a great city with no light save that of man's making.

It invited him and he would go for a walk along the crowded streets. He did not wander far, however, but only from one well-marked point to another along St. Catherine's Street. For a long time he saw no one whom he knew; all faces were confusion to him; then one appeared which he recognized instantly; it was that of the young-faced, white-haired man who had spoken to him at dinner. He did not see D'Arcy and so passed by, talking to his jolly companions.

At length, tired and weary, the lad returned to his lodging, went to bed and fell quickly off into the magic mists of sleep—the noises of a new world that both lured and gave him fear, echoing in his ears for a few moments and then dying out with the last flicker of consciousness.

Sleep D'Arcy boy, in your lonely room against the roof; you are but one of many such lads, in just such rooms at this moment, in this wide land! Prompted by a natural instinct to go forward in life, you seek the city; lured by the show of ease, amusement and prosperity you leave the laborious and humdrum life of the country. And who would blame you? Not I for one! It must be so. This stream of youth has gone on flowing these many years from the meadows and the woodlands to the hard and dusty streets and the busy marts and offices of our cities; fortune seekers, all of them, yet in themselves a fortune for the city and the country alike which is wise enough to mature and use their manhood. If the city is a land of promise to D'Arcy and such as he, they, in turn, are the very red corpuscles in the blood of the city's life. The pity is more than a thousand in number that any unnecessary barrier should divide life in the fields from life in the streets; that so many roads should lead to the city but so few of them into the midst of its redeeming life.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PLACE OF SPRINGS

IT is on Sunday morning, in Montreal that her great past speaks to us. Her church bells are the voices of her past. For one day in seven the modern business life is pressed from the stage as by an unseen hand, and the past is given place and action to remind us, that so far as the Church is concerned, the past and invisible must never be taken for the dead and inactive.

No nation's life could have been more distinctly religious in embryo than was Canada's. It is in Montreal on Sunday morning, more than anywhere else in the land that this fact is made apparent to the one who walks abroad with open mind, discerning the voices of the bells.

D'Arcy heard them ringing through his bedroom window in the early hours, and he got up quickly, fearing the day was already far advanced. He looked at his watch to certify the time, and finding it too early for rising, he went to bed again for the space of an hour—not to sleep, however, but to think and wonder. Then he got up and made a careful toilet, after which he went down to the breakfast room where he found himself alone. This was a great comfort to him.

All the other inmates of "The Burnside" were

resting their weary bodies in refreshing slumber; for is not the Sabbath a day of rest and is not rest a thing of the body only? Therefore sleep, feast, and walk abroad and bestow every care on the body! The soul, if indeed man has such a possession, must be cared for by happy chance.

So everybody slumbered late at "The Burnside" to the great delight of D'Arcy, who could thus breakfast by himself and slip off unobserved to Church. There if anywhere in the great strange city, he would find something familiar, something of home, something to satisfy a longing which habit had rendered precious, at least for the moment.

Had he been among the Gatineau hills he would have attended Divine Service as a matter of course, not for pleasure, not as impelled by notions of duty, but for custom's sake; his family did so, his companions likewise, and so must he. And there was delight in the tramp to the Church among the hills, over mountain pathway and across flowering meadow; and there was delight also in the meeting of young and old assembled from far scattered communities along the river and its tributary streams and in the rich valleys and on the rugged hillsides.

Although D'Arcy now found himself robbed of all these motives, yet so fast was habit upon him that to go to church was the natural thing for him to do on Sunday, and so he set out with great hope and no particular church as his objective. Along the hot and dusty street, therefore, he made his way, a little prayer book in his pocket, passing a

thousand attractions in shop windows and on the street corners, till he came at length to a church, at once recognized as Anglican.

It was near the hour of Service and the bells were ringing. The morning was hot and the doors were wide open, the windows were also open as much as possible, but on going into the church, D'Arcy found a musty odour as from old carpets. Few people were entering the imposing House of God and few were to be seen inside, and these were mostly women of sensible age; there were some men also of the heroic type and well advanced in years.

The Verger, in flowing gown, greeted D'Arcy and offered him a seat well up the side aisle. No one else was on duty save a solitary grey-haired man in the centre aisle. Like the Verger and the pillars he seemed part of the establishment. D'Arcy was not given a hymn book on entering and there was none in the pew save those perchance in their owner's locker. D'Arcy knelt down to pray, out of custom, and rose up to wonder at the magnificence of the edifice and the emptiness of the pews. Soon people in ones and twos came in. Another sidesman had appeared by this time. Presently there had gathered a sprinkling of worshippers. The clock now began to stroke off Eleven, and the choir in the vestry to sing, "Amen" to the opening prayer. D'Arcy strained his eyes in the direction of the sound of the music, and presently the vanguard of the choir appeared. He had not seen a surpliced choir before nor witnessed

the singing of a processional hymn; the experience occasioned a thrill of delight.

A mother and her three daughters now entered the pew beside him; they glanced at him, knelt down, rose up, undid the locker and took out their books.

Now, thought the young stranger, I shall have a hymn book—surely it will be offered me by ladies in the House of God.

Not so! Hymn books kept in lockers are for the angels of the pew — so sing sweet ladies — your voices and your piety are well-pleasing—at least to yourselves!

The choir in white surplices now filled the stalls and were singing beautifully a familiar hymn. This charmed D'Arey, for if he had no hymn book and the good ladies beside him offered him none, he could yet join in the singing for he knew both hymn and tune by heart. So D'Arey sang from memory as best he could, for a while, but the heart grows faint without encouragement. Moreover, his voice was so rough and husky that people with non-committal faces turned to look at him, and the woman beside him in the pew so stared at him out of the corner of her eye that D'Arey fell into silence like most of the devout worshippers about him.

The choir sang on excellently to the end of the hymn and D'Arey for the first time found delight in having his praising of God so well done for him. The rector gazed frequently down at the congregation (and so too the curate) while the singing was yet in progress and finally turned to repeat

the "Dearly beloved brethren". He began in a high monotone and persisted throughout the beautiful address in the same meaningless voice. D'Arcy's spirits began to sink. His last hope of finding something familiar to cheer him in the great city was fading away.

The choir then sang beautifully "The Venite" but there was no pleasure in it for him. He might listen in silence but not share audibly and there was no roll of manly voices praising God, as in the little Church among the hills. Even the lessons were read in a sing-song voice, it never having entered the reader's head that anyone present might have a soul hungering for the Word of God. As for the sermon it was so full of profound learning and the discussion of strange questions that D'Arcy was left in a state of mental stupor; thus, tragedy of tragedies, at the most receptive moment in his soul's life, he was allowed to turn away still thirsting, from the Well of God.

He knew not how to appreciate the mystery of architecture, the wonder of singing, the eloquent discourse of the learned preacher. He only knew, the Living Christ was somehow left out of the sermon, and that he, D'Arcy Conyers, hungered and thirsted for something which he did not get or hear about.

No one offered him hand or smile as he left the place. He walked out as he walked in, unnoticed, and he walked out not to return for many a long day to come. His own church meant nothing to him in the great metropolis, on the verge of life's sea. He had gone to the Place of Springs, but the springs had ceased to flow—at least for him.

CHAPTER XIII.

BETSY'S SMILE

BRIGHT and early on Monday morning D'Arey set out for the office, which under the direction of a fellow inmate of his lodging house he had located on the afternoon of the Saturday before.

He hurried along Burnside Place, therefore, till he saw the Cathedral rise dark and grey in the misty yellow light. The clock in the steeple pointed to half-past eight, and, suddenly announced the hour to all the city in such tones as made D'Arey start.

True, the distance to the office could have been made by one who was familiar with the way, in half the time he had allowed himself, yet he quickened his pace, hurriedly crossed St. Catherine's Street, and, taking the diagonal path through Phillips Square, under spreading elm trees, since destroyed by order of the city fathers, he descended Beaver Hall Hill, redolent with memories of old fur-trading days, as D'Arey very well knew; with mighty strides he crossed Victoria Park, a patch of sooty green traversed by black footpaths, and was soon in the midst of the noise and movement of the city beginning its daily round.

The roar of heavy carts on stone pavements

mingling with the shouts of French teamsters, the clear ringing of the newsboy's calls, "Gazette", "La Presse", and the intermittent whir and rattle of street cars, all combined to make a din so deafening, so bewildering and yet so delightfully stimulating to D'Arcy's spirits, that he pressed forward with even more rapid pace, afraid, though he knew he was early, lest work might have begun in the offices of the city because forsooth it was flowing so fast and noisily along her streets and pavements.

Hurrying up St. James' Street he came presently to a dark sandstone building where he saw, on a brass tablet by the entrance, the name—"Benson & Co., Stockbrokers." Having located the place with certainty, and being too early for his work by a quarter of an hour, he decided to stroll about the street, look at the shop windows, observe the passers by, and yet keep within a short distance of his destination.

Five minutes before the hour, D'Arcy, resolute and yet timorous, entered the hallway of the red sandstone building and saw before him the elevator man just inside the door of his car. D'Arcy approached him at once and asked to be taken to the office of Messrs. Benson and Co.; and stepping into the car he was deposited a moment later in a dimly lighted passage on the second floor. "Ninety-eight" called out the elevator man, as he saw D'Arcy glancing about for the name of the firm, and then disappeared as if he had dropped into the bottomless pit.

D'Arcy's quick eye soon lighted upon the name

of "Benson & Co." in gold letters on a door which stood partly open. He took off his hat, held it in his hand, cleared his throat and entered. "What would he say? To whom would he speak? Would anyone speak to him?"

Such were some of the questions which agitated his brain at the moment of his entering the world of business—to him so new and terribly strange. He felt himself confused and blushing. His feet seemed so clumsy, his clothes so ill-fitting, his hands so big and stiff. He cleared his throat again to speak, but his mouth and face seemed swollen, and his voice had never before sounded to him quite so sepulchral and rough.

Meantime several members of the staff glanced at him and went on with their work as though he were not needing, in the most painful way, instant relief from his trying predicament.

His sense of embarrassment was complete when a pretty-faced girl came forward to enquire of him whom he would like to see. She seemed so neat and attractive: her eyes were blue, she had a wealth of dark hair, and she smiled so sweetly that D'Arcy was charmed, while at the same time he felt himself more clumsy and awkward than ever.

"Whom do you wish to see?" she enquired in a tone of voice which was like music to his ear, and most captivating.

Putting one of his awkward hands to his mouth, D'Arcy cleared his throat a third time and answered, "Mr. Benson, if you please, Miss."

At this she smiled again, and said, "He's not in; take a seat till he comes." and turning on her heel

she left him and went to attend to her other duties, while D'Arcy sat down as quickly as though he had been suddenly proven guilty of some offence and did himself up in as small a parcel as possible, that he might not be seen of anyone till he should have recovered his composure.

Twenty minutes or more must have passed before Mr. Benson entered, during which time D'Arcy adjusted his eyes to the light of the office, viewed everything carefully about the room, noted the desks at which the clerks were working, and the books they made use of; he studied their personal features also, and more than once let his eyes rest on the profile, that of the pretty stenographer, against the window light.

Promptly at twenty minutes past nine by the clock on the wall a tall gentleman entered in a light tweed suit; he wore a straw hat with a dark red band about it and had a flower in the right lapelle of his coat. D'Arcy recognized him at once as Mr. Benson though for a year or more he had not seen him. He addressed a "Good-morning" to the staff, and going through the outer office he entered by a door marked, "Mr. Benson"; he had not observed D'Arcy seated by the door.

The pretty stenographer now went to Mr. Benson's door, knocked, disappeared, and reappeared in a moment. Then coming towards D'Arcy she smiled most winsomely and with more of respect than formerly. "Mr. Benson is in now," said she, "and would like to see you. Come this way please."

So saying she led the way to the office of the

head of the firm of Benson & Co. and showing D'Arcy in, closed the door behind him and returned to her own desk by the window.

His interview with Mr. Benson was not a trying ordeal, for, as we have seen, he had already met that gentleman several times on his fishing trips to the Gatineau. Moreover, D'Arcy had somewhat composed himself since first entering the office; while awaiting the arrival of Mr. Benson he thought of his own ability at figures, and had come to the conclusion that what he saw the clerks doing he could do also; and he fixed his resolution to work if ever he should get his hand on a pen.

Chiefly, however, the young man's composure was due to something in Mr. Benson himself. He was one of those rare men who move in an atmosphere of repose. His brain was clear, his heart kind and he was gifted with quiet. Moreover, he had come that morning fresh from his home by the St. Lawrence where he lived for the summer of each year, and where he had learned to know the rustic folk and their rough dress and uncouth ways.

He judged them not by their clothes or their manner of speech, and often found among them ability, diligence, and habits of work, qualities which have done so much in the cause of prosperity and good citizenship, and of which, not a few among us of all classes, stand in such dire need at the present day.

Mr. Benson grasped D'Arcy's hand, bade him sit down, smiled pleasantly upon him and observed: "Well, D'Arcy, you have come to try city

life! I had a note from Mr. Battershall and got you a room at 'The Burnside', I hope you like it."

"I do sir, very much!" the young man replied, with a smile.

"How are your parents? Very well I hope."

"Very well thank you, Mr. Benson."

"Had you any fishing this season, D'Arcy?"

"Oh yes, indeed sir, there are plenty of fish as usual and I have been off several times."

"Well, now I suppose you want to hear about your work. I have a good letter about you from Mr. Battershall and you should do nicely here. The city is strange to you and the work new, but in time you'll get on. There are two things we require rather than much work, we require accuracy and honesty; rapidity will come later, but what we demand are these, accuracy and honesty! And of course every one has to begin at the bottom."

D'Arcy knew he could be accurate and believed he could be honest too, and it was a relief to hear that he was to begin far down the ladder where the work would be simplicity itself.

Mr. Benson now stood up, and shaking D'Arcy's hand again, said, "I will be the friend of the young man who is accurate and honest and looks after the interest of the Firm. Now I will show you your work."

He rang the bell and the pretty-faced stenographer appeared at the door in a moment. "Will you call Mr. Graham please, Miss Turner?" said Mr. Benson. She disappeared again and Mr. Graham entered not many seconds after.

“Mr. Graham, this is D’Arcy Conyers of whom I spoke to you some days ago. I have been to his home on the Gatineau more than once. We have fished together, haven’t we D’Arcy? And by the way you must come out to my home sometime (which indeed D’Arcy did on more than one occasion during his first year in the city) and he is now come to take a position on our staff. Well, you know the work Mr. Graham; kindly give full explanations to D’Arcy.”

“Good-morning D’Arcy, for the present.”

“D’Arcy replied, “Thank you; good-morning, sir,” and passed out of the door in the company of Mr. Graham.

When the day was over and he had returned at evening to “The Burnside” he had succeeded in acquiring some degree of confidence in himself; he was satisfied he could be accurate and he believed he could be honest.

Nevertheless so keen was his sense of uncouthness of manner and dress in the midst of clerks familiar with city life and ways, that he might never have returned again to the office had it not been for the kindness of Mr. Benson and the captivating smile of Betsy Turner.

CHAPTER XIV.

ST. HELEN'S ISLE

IT was the opening day of the pleasure season at St. Helen's Isle, and it was very hot, for the sky was cloudless and the air without a stirring of the faintest kind.

Little homes along the congested city streets were sending forth their inmates in quest of the open spaces, the green sward, the shadowing trees, the singing birds, and the music of the flowing river; treasures for God's children of the city streets and lanes, stored away on the island of St. Helen.

Serene it rises, this bit of green earth like a mighty emerald fixed in the midst of the racing waters of the St. Lawrence, mingling green and brown as they pass, flowing mightily.

D'Arcy's way from "The Burnside" lay along St. James' Street to where it disappears into Notre Dame, hard by the Nelson column and the market of Bonsecours, where on week days French Canada may be seen grouped and coloured as in a picture.

It was Sunday, however, when D'Arcy came, and this famous meeting place was without buyer or seller, without carts or horses; the vacant square was flooded with unkindly sunlight, and

hot lifeless air: the stalls were shuttered and bolted up with the same old fastenings which have done service on the same old doors and windows for many a long year. At the upper windows of the ancient stone houses which stand round about the place and help to give it character, French men and women were chattering in high-pitched voices; in the shadow of an over-hanging porch a good-natured policeman was making merry with some children: there were not many noises to be heard; only the rattling by of a street car from time to time, and the falling of many footsteps on the pavement as processions of middle-aged women passed now and again, on their way to Vespers at the old Church of Bonsecours.

Having gone about the market area to his satisfaction, D'Arcy drew near to the famous church as its bells were ringing and a black procession entering; then he turned aside and went down a narrow lane by old French doorways, where groups of men sat smoking and chatting; presently the river came in sight, and the tall masts of the ships were seen in the distance.

It was a wondrous sight to his eyes, so he made haste and was soon on the wharf where the long-shoremen rattled and clattered their trucks about the dock with business-like activity and crowds were moving towards the moorings of the ferry boat by a long pier far out in the stream. The French Canadians, a happy people, were speaking in voices of merriment; some of them were parents with chattering youngsters, others young men with sweethearts in highly coloured dresses and

bright ribbons. And there was a group of men speaking English, smoking cigarettes, and habited in the best of summer clothing; with them D'Arey could see the man with the grey hair, the young face, and the heavy black string to his spectacles, who had spoken to him at "The Burnside."

For a time D'Arey eluded the sight of this man and his companions, by keeping at a distance from them and mingling freely with the crowd. There was much to interest him about the place: the ships with tall masts; the white and graceful river boat for Quebec and the Saguenay; the ocean liner too, in her business-like red and black; the smart little tug-boat hurrying hither and thither at the will of the master and in defiance of the currents; far down stream a man-of-war with her white ensign unfurled to the breeze, was being towed to her moorings by a plucky little tug-boat; and the ferry-boat just come to dock, her black smoke pouring in heavy clouds, her deep-voiced whistle blowing, and all her flags in motion—the flag of Britain, and the tri-colour of the French, in memory of a day when their forefathers were masters of well nigh a continent. It was thrilling, it was fascinating, and for a time it absorbed his complete attention. Then the blowing of the great whistle on the ferry boat roused him from his dreams and he hurried on to the booking office.

Just before him when he drew near, he saw the well-dressed man with the young face, the sharp features, and grey hair, standing in the crowd about the wicket. D'Arey recognized him

at once as Ben Lucas, and thought kindly of him as the only inmate of "The Burnside" who had spoken to him since his arrival.

As Ben left the wicket smiling blandly as usual, his quick eye espied D'Arcy moving forward among the crowd to get his ticket.

"D'Arcy! exclaimed Ben. "What, lost?" And so saying he hurried on to join his companions.

D'Arcy was none too pleased at being recognized just then and still less so at Ben's form of greeting. And the words, "What, lost?" struck him and penetrated his skin like buckshot. As D'Arcy thought on them he became furious; they were a slur upon his country origin and his lack of acquaintance with the city and its life. He recovered himself, however, put on a bold front and fortified himself for the next interview which was not long delayed.

Ben and his companions were seated on deck smoking when D'Arcy encountered them again. As he drew near to them Ben again called out, "Not lost, Mossy, I hope? Come and have a seat; we won't hurt you!"

D'Arcy's countenance flashed fire, and he replied, "No, not lost; finding my way about here as I expect to do about life. And then one always meets clever people to ask for information if one wants to," said he, his blood boiling.

Everybody on the Gatineau knew how to fight and D'Arcy was quite ready if the matter went any further, "to wire in" as the saying is, right then.

"Well done, Mossy, you'll do!" exclaimed

Lucas, "where are you off to anyhow?"

"Why to see—to see the sights," said D'Arcy, amused now at his own hasty indignation. "Well, to tell the truth," he added laughingly, as the Ferry swept out into the current, "I'm off to St. Helen's Island. I have read in my school books that it was called after Champlain's wife and I have always wanted to see it."

"Ha! Ha!" ejaculated Ben, turning to his companion and remarking, "He is a pretty slick coon too, this Mossy." and giving D'Arcy's remark a turn which must not be repeated, he continued:

"You want to see the sights, eh? Well, come on, and we'll show them to you, won't we boys! Here, have a cigarette!"

"No thanks, don't smoke."

"Well! for the love of Mike, you innocent! You'll be going to Sunday School next!"

"Say boys, he doesn't smoke!"

"Your mamma said you mustn't, eh?"

"He'll soon get off that notion," said one of them, and added, "can't do the town without the weed. We grow it and chew it, and smoke it, in this part of the world."

"And eat it too, I suppose!" exclaimed D'Arcy in withering tones.

"Ever heard of 'Tabac Canadien', up in your country?" one enquired of him. "That's the kind we don't smoke; leave it to the habitant!"

"Well, can you chew gum?" enquired another of the group from which D'Arcy seemed unable to escape, much as he wished to do so."

“Yes, I might do that all right.”

“Here, take this then till you learn the man’s art of smoking!” ejaculated Ben with hollow laughter.

“Smoked once,” said D’Arcy, smiling, “and it made me sick.”

“Well it’s worth two or three good sickens to learn”, added one of the group.

“D’Arcy had no alternative but to go with Ben and his companions, but he cursed his luck. He had hoped to go about unnoticed and find his way alone, for he was shy, awkward, ignorant, and his country-cut clothes were ill-fitting. These young men, in contrast, were as neat as tailors could make them, each carried a cane and gloves, while poor D’Arcy scarce knew what to do with his big hands. He could make no excuse for leaving them, he must go and endure it, though fearing that he would be led into some place of iniquity, at the very thought of which he shuddered.

Thus poking fun at D’Arcy’s expense, meaning him no harm, thinking not nearly so much of his country ways as he was inclined to imagine, they passed the few moments of crossing time and were soon striding along the dock and making their way up the rising ground of the island. Higher and higher the black pathway led them to where the black house is, and the heavy bit of forest, and the deep and secluded valleys. At every step the splendour of the view increased and D’Arcy thought it strange that his companions saw it not but were absorbed in shallow conversation and silly laughter.

To him the St. Lawrence seemed so vast as compared with the Gatineau or the Ottawa, so deeply green too, in contrast; and the speed with which it passed astonished him, like a mill race, it was indeed! "How could it be?" he enquired of himself, for he was ashamed to ask those with him,—“how could it be that boats could come up against this current or cross it as did the ferry?”

And it was a pleasant sight which D'Arcy's eyes beheld as the group sat down in the grass and looked towards the west; the river was leaping and splashing in myriads of little scale-like waves, and beyond it, the docks, the ships at rest, the tower of Bonsecours Church, the sombre buildings of the old part of the city and the far off dome of Mount Royal half hidden in a film of smoke.

“If I had only been alone!” thought he. “If on the other hand I were not such a guy!”

And there and then he resolved to cast off his country exterior; the clothes could go almost at once—the manners would in time. What would he not give to be dressed like these unwelcome companions, to have the voice, the language, and the charm of Ben Lucas!

Meantime at the next ice cream stand they came to, he would do what he might at once to commend himself to the favour of his companions; and so he did (for they soon rose from where they had been resting and went again on their wanderings) and all drank freely at D'Arcy's expense.

It was a simple thing—very simple and harm-

less too you would say; some might even think it right enough; this however, is what it meant—the money hardly earned among the Gatineau Hills by other hands than his, began to slip from his fingers for no higher purpose than that of winning the favour of undesirable companions; and in days soon to come his inborn passion for that which delights the eye and tickles pleasantly the ear began to leap forward toward full and costly realization.

CHAPTER XV.

MORNING ON OLD CRAIG STREET

IT was morning on old Craig Street, and a very fine morning too. The air was full of brightness and the sky was full of clouds, but scattered and fleeing clouds; for during the night they had showered their blessings on the city streets and were now floating away to rest in the blue spaces behind Mount Royal.

And if the air was lucid because of the night and the rain, it was likewise stimulating to the spirits because of a certain quality of autumn crispness which already pervaded it.

It was but natural, therefore, that on this delightful morning more than the usual number of footsteps should be heard resounding along the wet and sunlit pavements, for who, having legs to carry him through such living air, would endure a crowded and stuffy street car? And what fat son of fortune would elect to glide down to his office in a luxurious motor, who could still recall the joys of striding along in days when he was neither so fat, so old, or so prosperous as now? And why, therefore, should not D'Arey Conyers, be among the pedestrians on that crisp autumn morning?

After the passing of three years of diligence and

rapid advance in the employ of Benson & Co., this young man was offered a position with another firm demanding both skill and confidence and promising him in return a very comfortable salary.

He was elated beyond measure with his success, and on the fine morning in question was striding along towards the scene of his new occupation and at length came to the crossing of old Craig Street at the foot of Bleury where all was noise and movement. The white-helmeted policeman on point duty alone seemed fixed; the crowded tram cars clanged their bells and creaked round the corners in endless succession, or went clattering over the joints of the trackage; heavy carts rattled by on stone pavements while their French drivers shouted at the tops of their voices to their stumbling horses; pedestrians, jostling each other helms, moved rapidly in every direction, and a veritable human tide pouring down Bleury Street crossed old Craig, pressed up St. Peter's and disappeared among the banks and offices of the metropolis.

It was very natural therefore that D'Arcy Conyers walking down Bleury Street with smartness and rapidity, should encounter Ben Lucas, who had come to play a telling and unfortunate part in his life and habits.

"Oh, its you, Ben!" exclaimed D'Arcy as he felt someone pluck his coat sleeve and turned to see who it was.

"Yes, it's me all right," said Ben with a great laugh, "you don't seem to know your friends, now you've risen in the world."

“Well, I should say I’d know you old sport, anywhere. Once a friend, always a friend with me, Ben!”

“Where have you been lately?” enquired D’Arcy, as they made the crossing at Craig Street.

“Oh, down the country for the week; but tell me how did you get the situation?” said Ben, whose mind was jealously absorbed in D’Arcy’s recent and notable promotion. “I met the bunch last night and they were all talking about it.” And, without waiting for an answer, he added.

“Your collar is too small for you already, D’Arcy. Ha! Ha! Gosh, you look polished up this morning!”

“I don’t know anything about my situation yet. I only got it last week and I’m on my way to try it now.”

“With the Montreal Paper Mill Company?”

“Yes.”

“As Treasurer?”

“No, as cashier only.”

“Do the banking?” Ben enquired— “Make out the big cheques for all hands and keep your own cash book—a position worth while, by gosh! And a good income too, I’ll bet.”

“Ripping!”

So saying the two parted with smiles and laughter. On Ben’s countenance there was jealousy mingled with pleasure. He had gone but a step or two when he turned and whistled and D’Arcy recognizing the call, turned about and saw him coming towards him his face lighted up with new hopes.

"I say, are you going out there to-night. D'Arey?"

"Sorry, but I have an engagement at the Theatre."

"Betsy, I suppose! Hard hit! Got it bad old man!" he added with an attempt at jollity which only partly concealed his envy and disappointment.

D'Arey merely smiled his reply and turned again to go. Ben turned also and went in the opposite direction; dark and ugly of countenance was he now, because jealousy raged in his soul, that D'Arey, though not yet twenty-one, should have so risen in position and so added to his income while he remained still the competent book-keeper with a mere pittance and nothing more. Why it was so with him, as well as why he gained and held sway over D'Arey, may be learned from a fuller and more intimate account of Ben Lucas and his ways.

Ben was the type of person who might be described as of charming manner; partly it was natural to him, for he was well born, and partly it was the outcome of assiduous cultivation; for he delighted in the society of others and consequently sought diligently to make himself agreeable. And they were not few in number, nor were they all of the same character who found pleasure in his company.

In appearance he was unusual; that is to say, he did not go by with the multitude; on the contrary he was seen, he was noticed, he was marked. One saw him approaching when as yet he was some distance off, as D'Arey beheld him the first

night he set foot on St. Catherine's Street. One feature which made him conspicuous was his hair which he always wore long, and which was almost white though he was not above forty and five in age. Another reason for noticing Lucas, was a long black heavy string which hung from the end of his eye-glasses and encircled his neck. But chiefly was he distinguished because of his sharp, clean-shaven, youthful face and smiling countenance. Drawing nearer to him one saw a large mouth, and a splendid set of teeth, for he was always smiling, laughing, and talking in a most entertaining fashion.

Moreover, Ben had a pleasant voice with deep rich notes in it, and his ruddy countenance easily lighted up with the spirit of holiday, that kind of holiday in which the flesh is given large freedom. It was when off duty that this was most noticeable, indeed it was quite repressed during the hours of business.

Ben was an Englishman and had been educated for the Bar; in fact had reached it and made considerable progress in his profession in London. In Montreal he acted as an accountant. He had been married too in the old land, and this was the reason for his now being in the new one, for his wife refused to continue with a husband who chose to live as he pleased, and it pleased Ben Lucas not to worry over obedience to certain commands with all the authority of Moses behind them. Consequently though it was not known to many, he preferred the position of bookkeeper in Canada, with all the delights of a libertine, to that of a

barrister-at-law in London with the restraints of domestic life.

Lucas had also a great capacity for strong liquors and prided himself on the delicacy of his taste. Moreover, he was possessed of a remarkable ability for appearing sober when really as drunk as a lord.

More might be said of Ben Lucas to his detriment—but enough for our present purpose. Suffice it to add that one meets but few men in life deserving the name of scoundrel: Ben Lucas wins that epithet.

Such was the man who on this morning three years after their meeting at "The House with the Brass knocker" jostled into D'Arey Conyers, on the thronging, noisy crossing of Bleury and old Craig Street. He too it was who alone of the occupants of "The Burnside" spoke to the raw country lad the night of his first dining there. It was he and his companions who chanced to meet him that Sunday afternoon, when D'Arey went straying to St. Helen's Island and led him by taunt and pointed thrust of sneering words to make certain foolish resolves. Moreover, it was Ben who went often to the lad's room in those early days to spend an hour with him in friendly intercourse; and D'Arey was greatly delighted and even flattered, not then being beyond the age when youths make heroes of older men and throw about them the glamour of affection. To D'Arey he seemed so clever, so interesting, so full of romance, so much a man of the world, so very cultured in language and manner.

And it must be said that Ben Lucas found his attraction in the uncouth country boy when as yet he had not lost his purity of mind or soul, though throbbing with desires and determined to cast off everything which made him less a man, less an accomplished man, than the one whom he saw so often and devoured with eyes of admiration. In Ben, whom D'Arey at first called "sir", which was gratifying to the wretch's vanity, the young lad saw the model of what he hoped to become. In D'Arey, Ben looked upon what once he was. Both were attracted.

Ben was an expert accountant and so it frequently happened that D'Arey found him able, and always willing, to give him the required help when as yet he was uncertain of many things.

Mrs. Painter, good soul, watched the growing friendship with apprehension and not infrequently gave the young man hints. But it was little she could say against so delightful a boarder as Lucas, and for that matter little she knew; so the friendship grew, and with it D'Arey acquired the manners and the habits of his idol.

Ben saw the lad's possibilities from his first conversation with him and marked him as one who was bound to rise quickly and to gain large income and position. Always in straits by reason of his profligacy and destined to a humble office situation through the sin and folly of his own early years, Ben hurriedly applied every art in his power to enthrone himself in D'Arey's affection. In this he succeeded beyond his expectations, and though D'Arey had discovered his own powers and won a

high position he had also acquired extravagant habits which in the end would not be denied and had come to demand no little money for their satisfaction and a huge amount of things more precious.

Thus matters stood in the lives of these two men, and such was the relationship between them, when they chanced to meet on the fine morning in question, at a certain corner of old Craig Street.

Meanwhile the friend of the Conyers family, Mr. Benson, was a stranger, quite a stranger to the inner life of D'Arcy and to his goings on. Although he tried many times to gain the young man's confidence, he failed in his efforts. Moreover there never appeared any special reason for prying into the secrets of his thoughts and life, and D'Arcy showed no disposition to reveal what was not necessary of his mind. The visit to Mr. Benson's home on the river was repeated several times during the first year of his life in Montreal, after which, D'Arcy's excuses and apologies for refusing were of such a nature as to satisfy his employer. The young man was evidently forming his own associations, adjusting himself to city life and ways, and Mr. Benson naturally allowed longer and longer time to elapse between his invitations.

Meantime D'Arcy was proving his ability as a member of the office staff; he was complimented, he was congratulated and advanced in his salary not once nor twice. When the moment came that a new appointment was offered him, one which promised not only responsibility for the present

but was indeed the open door to still higher preferment, Mr. Benson was first to congratulate him. Moreover, he assured him of his interest in his welfare and of his readiness to help him at any time should the need arise.

“You must know, D’Arcy,” said he, “that I let you go with great reluctance and yet with my best wishes. You owe it to yourself, and to your family to do the best you can in life and this looks like a good thing; but come and see us sometimes D’Arcy, and don’t forget our fishing trips. Meantime give my best wishes to your family.” So with kindness of manner and a strong grip of the hand, which he held for a second, he let the youth depart, little realizing and yet not wholly without suspicion that D’Arcy was yielding to the fascinations of his new friends and surroundings.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FATAL SCORE

IT was the first day of July, the natal day of our young Dominion, and, consequently, there must be merry-making everywhere through this wide land. Even the puffing little saw-mills by the streams among the Gatineau Hills would not blow their shrill whistles this morning, calling the men to work in the early hours and the freshness. As for the city, it was silent and would remain so, like a Sabbath, so far as the noises of factory and market were concerned.

And not only was there to be everywhere a holiday but all our peoples would share in the rejoicing, for on this one day in the land of two races and more, there must be but one nationality — Canadian. So only can we celebrate the occasion duly and honour the names of Cartier and Macdonald. On this day at least, Canada's heart beats are strong, and the flowing of the blood of national life unimpeded. And our National Hymn, "O Canada", written by a French Judge, and rendered into English by a celebrated poet of native birth, sounds well the note of deeper unity between the races to whom Providence has accorded the privilege of living side by side and working together for

the common good of all dwellers in this strong land of the maple tree and the spreading wheat field.

It was early in the morning of this day, very early, when, by some motion of the Great Spirit, D'Arcy Conyers woke from slumber, and was startled at seeing a faint reddish glow on the coverlet of the bed beneath which he was lying. Instantly he leaped to the floor and hurried to the window to see if perchance the city were on fire. Outside the open window rose the spreading topmost branches of a tall willow tree, some of its narrow leaves stirring in a faint movement of the air; through them and beyond the whole sky was one blaze of red.

It was a moment before the young man could collect his wits and calm his starting fears. He had seen the sun rising there many a morning, since he abandoned the little sky-light room and moved into this more comfortable one on the second floor, in consequence of his improved income, and had given it no more than a momentary admiration. Now he stood before the open window speechless, viewing the dawn.

Above the house tops there was a faint darkness still; the lanes were night-like, and the lamps burnt dimly on the street corners. The sky low to earthward was one field of colour; the sun itself had not come to the line, but clouds like great waves fixed, were every moment deepening into fiery red; and there were patches of momentary pink scattered far and wide. Here, green tones were coming on; there, purple ones were lengthening and spreading; then, of a sudden, all the rainbow

colours were mingling and playing with each other fantastically. Presently, the orange rim of the sun, like a new moon in a sea of gold, appeared; and the glory of the dawn began to brighten into the glory of the day.

What impressed D'Arcy and sent him back to his bed thinking more deeply than ever in his life, was not only the exceeding splendour of the sight, but, the thought that he might have missed seeing it; for it was going on noiselessly, while men slept, and God had but few spectators for His great display.

Not many hours later on the same eventful day, D'Arcy was among the passengers who were thronging the gangways of the Quebec boat and crowding up the stairs to reach the decks above. He must needs go to the stateroom which he was to share with Ben Lucas, who had not yet arrived, that he might leave there his grip, his great coat, and his umbrella. Having done this he locked the door behind him, slipped quietly out, went forward and ascended the outside stair leading to the upper deck, and there stood beneath the wheel-house alone.

The deep broad river flowing so rapidly towards the clouded sky line did not escape his half-wondering gaze. His spirits were somewhat down, for there was with him still, as it were the lingering of a dream, the memory of the heavens seen through his window in the early morning: he looked again at the sky line and the river running swiftly toward it. It was such a contrast to the dawn for it hung in heavy folds of grey and inky black, as

though in mourning. There was not a trace of the sun anywhere, only heavy blackness; he had not seen such a heaven before. And yet there was not, so far as he could make out, even a distant rumble of thunder, and there was no lightning, not even the remote and spreading kind; only clouds. clouds, terrible to look upon, in beautiful folds, gathering so quickly, taking all manner of shapes—like waves of the sea, like giants of human form, like strong men in battle, and some in the outline of horses and chariots.

Following on the beautiful sunrise in the morning the vast and ominous spectacle depressed D'Arcy's spirits and he stood there beneath the wheel-house as one who had a presentment of coming disaster. Smoker that he was, he could not summon enough courage to light his cigar. Suddenly he heard a quick step coming towards him and a bright "Hello, old man!" It was Ben Lucas who strode up and gripped him firmly by the arm and hailed him.

"I say, old man, have you the key of twenty-six? I want to put in my grip. Come along!"

As they turned to go, there came to their ears the sound of the gangway being pulled in, the clanging of the Captain's bell, and the swishing of the water; the vessel was in motion.

The crowds were moving and talking excitedly—mostly in French; the band was playing an air expressive of wild joy atune to the spirits of the passengers; and then all heads were uncovered, for the strains of "O Canada" rose and floated

over mighty river and ancient city alike, as the vessel struck forth into the current.

Ben and D'Arcy having entered the stateroom and settled what little matters required attention, were in the act of leaving it again when they encountered Joe Harris and Con Blackburn, two of Lucas' pals who were also making the pleasure voyage to the ancient City of Quebec.

"Hello, boys!" exclaimed Ben in his holiday voice.

"Hello, D'Arcy, you here too!" returned Con Blackburn; "we shall have a high old time, all of us together, and Ben here as leader of the bunch!"

At which remark there was an outburst of laughter suggestive of the riotous nature of the enjoyment to which Ben and his friends looked forward.

"Where is your stateroom, Joe?" enquired Ben.

"Two hundred and nineteen. Con and I are together; small room, an inside one, the best we could get."

"Well I'm an old hand at the game; I got mine two weeks ago from the purser. D'Arcy and I are in together, but it is a large room and we can have a game of poker before the day is over. Let's to the deck and get seats there before everything worth while is taken. There's an awful crowd on board."

"Let's to the bar and have a drink, say I, before we go on deck!" exclaimed Blackburn.

"Who pays the first treat?" enquired D'Arcy.

"I do," replied they all in chorus.

"No, it's one for all," said Blackburn, "let's toss for it! Heads or tails Harrison?"

"Heads!" was the reply.

"D'Arcy, you flip the quarter;" which he did and down it came. "Heads" up.

"Heads, heads, your treat, Blackburn!" and they entered the bar and drank each to his liking.

It was two years now since D'Arcy had stood by the bar in the old St. Lawrence Hotel and taken his first whiskey and soda. Meantime he had become proficient at the art, and in this particular at least was no longer a country "guy", as he often thought himself in the early days of his association with Ben. Each member of the party treated in turn and when they left the bar, the day's carousing had well begun.

An hour was spent on the upper deck in smoking, talking on all manner of subjects, none of them very elevating and many of them filthy, and every now and again, the laughter of Ben Lucas burst into a loud guffaw.

Within an hour after the mid-day meal all were calling for drinks. This time D'Arcy led the way to the bar.

Ben was soon in high spirits and prosposed a game of cards in number twenty-six.

"Not for me," said D'Arcy, "can't play," which was not quite true. "I scarcely know one card from another, I'm green as a cabbage leaf."

"Still a country 'guy'," thrust in Ben.

"Are you going to spoil the party?" exclaimed Joe with an oath, jocularly uttered; "we need you

and no stranger—play for small stakes old man—I'll pay the shot for you and myself."

This remark touched D'Arcy's vanity and he replied promptly, "Oh, I can pay the shot, but I can't play the game."

D'Arcy, it has been remarked, was a bright-witted fellow. His mind saw clearly the whole situation in every detail. Hence had he been skilled he would have excelled at cards. As it happened he knew more about playing than he cared to acknowledge. When quite a lad among the Gatineau Hills, it chanced that a party of miners were carrying on operations near the Conyers' home and more than once on Sunday afternoons, card playing went on secretly in one of the out-buildings. D'Arcy knowing of this became an onlooker of the proceedings, then caught its spirit of excitement, and finally took a hand in the game and soon played with astonishing cleverness.

Since coming to the city he had never once handled a card. He entertained a prejudice against the pastime. He knew his mother's abhorrence of it. Cards were never allowed in her home and on this point there was agreement between husband and wife. And while D'Arcy had skill enough to compete with the miners, he rather feared to try his hand with such as Ben Lucas and his comrades of "The Burnside". But he would not spoil the fun of the others this time. He had taken sufficient liquor to make him feel equal to any task, and Ben's taunt stung like a poisoned arrow.

The stakes were small when playing began. At first Ben won, which pleased him mightily and he drank freely, and became quite hilarious and reckless. Soon, however, things changed and luck came D'Arcy's way. The excitement of the game began to thrill him and a determination to win entered his soul. D'Arcy's clear brain together with his habitual secrecy of mind now stood him in good stead, for his face expressed nothing of the hands he held, he was able to bluff his competitors at frequent intervals and soon he was sweeping in the stakes at a great rate.

This irritated Ben who now proposed raising the stakes, hoping to make a lucky deal and retrieve his fortunes. But his brain was too muddled from drink and when his opportunity came he missed it and the spoils went again to D'Arcy, who though drinking with the others did so with great restraint.

He was now the talk of the table.

"You the chap who never handled a card!" exclaimed Joe Harris.

It was now D'Arcy's turn to propose that the stakes should be higher and to this they agreed, and Blackburn was successful. The loss was great and this put D'Arcy upon his mettle. And so they went on playing, D'Arcy winning repeatedly, till Ben was seeing double, Con. was in fighting trim and Joe in high spirits. D'Arcy was still scoring when night fell upon the widening river and the rugged heights on which stands the ancient city of Quebec guarding the gateway of Canada.

D'Arcy had won and lost!

CHAPTER XVII.

MORE OF BETSY TURNER

HAD the reader chanced to linger for any reason whatever, or for no reason at all, on one of the busy corners made by the crossing of St. Catherine and Bleury streets on a certain pleasant September evening as darkness was falling on the city, he might have observed the passing of a covered carriage, of a type not often seen now-a-days even on the streets of Montreal; it was shining and spotless as though fresh from the painter's brush, and was drawn by a spirited bay horse of splendid proportions, groomed with no lack of care, and fitted out with a harness having brass buckles, the very acme of the saddler's art; and it was driven by a man in livery.

Patience, reader! The occupant you will see in a moment, for the tram car is clearing the way and the coachman is turning up Bleury Street towards the rising ground and the falling sun.

The bright bay horse, with black mane and tail, prances as he waits for the car to pass and slips on the wet pavement as he springs forward again.

Behold now the occupant! The light is full upon his keen face!

As you expect, perfectly dressed; going to the theatre, you say, or perhaps a fashionable dinner;

young, you observe, a little pale, fine-featured, a smile reflecting a thought of something pleasant to come; but withal the poise and dignity of one quite accustomed to just such turnouts and just such evenings as that which now filled his thoughts and stirred his emotions.

This is Mr. D'Arcy Conyers, now treasurer of the Montreal Paper Company. See him pass, with his smile, and his keen face, and his sweet perfume, and his carriage, up the long incline yonder into the red and gold of the fading light; into the falling dusk let him go, happy because pleased with himself, happy too, in the thought that Betsy Turner is even now keeping one eye out the casement window for him and both ears open for the rumbling of his carriage wheels.

Betsy Turner was a pretty girl, and where in all the world is the man who finds no appeal in a pretty face? Surely there are none such to be found. D'Arcy Conyers at all events was not one of them. He thought Betsy Turner a beauty. Of course she was not, she was only pretty: her features were small, quite in keeping with the rest of her for that matter; and yet D'Arcy would never have thought of calling her a doll; nor would any other man, and that for reasons enough. To begin with, men do not care much for dolls; and then, dolls, however cleverly made, cannot smile, and this was the very thing Betsy Turner could do. Her whole face was one smile, when she chose to make it so (crafty little mortal) nor was it altogether superficial, like a ripple caused by a passing breath of air. No, she smiled

with her whole being, what there was of it, when D'Arcy came and at other times too, if it suited her. When you have seen a young woman with a finely-featured, pretty face, having two blue eyes and a wealth of dark hair, certain wandering strands of which, coquettishly enough, she was forever pushing aside from her face, you have seen all there was of the person Betsy Turner, save a quite unusual mental alertness and with it a certain cunning which enabled her to give the cleverest play to her winsome prettiness when she chose. She was the first girl to notice the worth of D'Arcy Conyers and he was immensely flattered. It was for her sake, as we have seen, and because of the magnetism of that bewitching smile that he returned, after his first day's experience, to the office.

For a long time she openly despised his rough country ways, but secretly she admired his ability and devotion to duty. She did not love him, but so much is not to be expected from one of Betsy Turner's soul. Consequently she would plan to meet him only at such times and places as kept him outside her immediate circle. She would have jilted him at any moment had some one more attractive to her fancy appeared. The truth is, not a few such had come, and having sounded her depths for themselves had gone even more gracefully than they had come. D'Arcy was flattered and devoted, and Betsy saw in him, (for it was coming to be a serious question with her) a prospect of something permanent though not wholly to her liking. He was a man, he was respected, he

was clever, he was handsome, and what was the important thing for the present, he had now come to be in receipt of a good salary and spent it freely upon her whims and fancies.

“D’Arcy,” she would say, “You should have such and such a tie! Yes, and this hat would suit you well;” or “You would look just perfect in a cut-away; and in this style you would be just a dear!”

Concerning her pretty self, she would enquire, “How would you like me in this, D’Arcy; or that?” Which remarks often led D’Arcy not only to spend freely on himself but to go the length of trying to present Betsy with far more expensive presents than his income would permit.

When she went on her holiday she must have a box of the most delicious chocolates for the trip, and a pound of the rarest grapes must be sent to her by mail every week during her absence. When they went to the theatre together, which was quite frequently, the door bell rang and the landlady called upstairs: “Miss Turner, a parcel for you.”

“Yes, thank you,” came back the sweet voice, “I shall be down directly,” and visions of crimson beauty roses, or of sweet peas or of violets out of season danced before her fancy, as tripping lightly downstairs she went to get the precious parcel.

D’Arcy would not allow her to take the street car, much less walk by his side to the theatre, no matter how near might be the destination. Oh, no, she must drive in a covered cab such as we have

described at the opening of this chapter. And always the seats secured were of the most expensive class, if indeed, he had not taken a box. And when the play was over there must be a supper at the Savoy with one or two of their intimate friends; the best service that could be had was none too good, and D'Arey Conyers, always delighting in fine appearances, left nothing to be desired in the appointments of the tables, the wines, or the attendance.

Matters had now gone so far between these two young people that D'Arey at last thought living together the *sine qua non* of earthly happiness. Betsy, her prettiness, her brightness of intellect, (which was often of assistance to him during his first days at Mr. Benson's and was always gladly placed at his service) her cleverness in the matter of dress, his as well as her own, all attracted him, flattered him, captivated him; he tumbled head over heels in love and forgot the restraints of economy; a man in position, he was yet only a boy in the affairs of a woman's heart.

And Betsy was D'Arey's first love. True when only a boy among the hills he had experience of a sweet sensation coming over his soul once at least; that day he looked in through the parlour window at Danford and saw dark-curved Eugenie Battershall playing the piano, or viewed her across the table that Sunday evening after the strawberry picking; but then love had come to him as a mere flicker of some new and gentle kind of fire on the altar of his heart. This was now but a memory

of the rapidly perishing kind. Betsy was the adorable and sweetly expensive.

They became engaged, as we have intimated, and Betsy exclaimed with delight when D'Arcy presented her with a diamond ring as the pledge of his adoration.

And so D'Arcy abandoned himself by little and little to Betsy Turner, so pretty, so winsome, so clever, and was now held in thrall, never thinking for a moment that Betsy could cast her spell over other young men as well, which of course she did with great freedom, till one day she in turn was charmed by an expert love maker without a penny to his name, and D'Arcy, after meeting them together several times in the street, received a pert little note saying that he need not call again.

The shaft from her bow reached his soul and discovered to him the painful truth that under any dress he had but the heart of a boy from the hills; a fact which was at once the source of his grief and of his hope.

After this D'Arcy gave himself to the company of men only, and with the companions of Ben Lucas sat late into many a night by the gaming table, and took a generous part in the emptying of many a bottle of claret, whisky or champagne. And ever the grip of habit grew stronger and ever the burden of debt piled higher.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHAMP D'MARS

I BEG the reader not to be too severe with D'Arey, but rather to judge himself: for nature gives to you and me and every man a little torch to see with. D'Arey was not unlike the rest of us in this regard. No, it was not light D'Arey stood most in need of at any time, but courage, that high type of the thing called moral courage.

The too sympathetic reader might say: "Poor D'Arey, the battle ground is rough to his tender young feet and the fight is therefore going hard against him! Behold how he trips and tumbles! Choose the place of conflict on even ground and this youth will show to all and sundry how victory may be won! Poor D'Arey!"

We are obliged to say, however, that such talk is mere fiddlesticks, and that where so used the current of sweet sympathy turns to marah and bitterness for some one. Has the reader not perceived before this that our young hero has had no battle ground, no Champ D' Mars, where a stand is made? Oh, no! D'Arey Conyers carried no sling—took no stones from the brooks which flow so freely down his rugged Gatineau Hills, went not out to the field of battle, but chose to turn aside and leave the Goliath of desire strutting

there boastful and audacious. Hence D'Arcy is bound and gagged, as every young man, and every young woman too, deserves to be, and is certain to be, who does not care to know that one day the battle must be joined and therefore the sooner and the more fiercely joined the better.

D'Arcy had indeed his little lamp to light his footsteps to the inevitable Champ D'Mars, but he had his longings too, sweet things, and it pleased him to say at first, "These shall have their way for a little, and then....." And the young cock even formed for himself a kind of philosophy, as many older and more learned men have done. It began thus: "Are they not born with me, these desires? I am not responsible for their possession; it is but natural; there ought to be no such conflict anyhow," which is tantamount, as every honest man knows full well, to declaring, "and there shall be none so far as D'Arcy Conyers is concerned."

Moreover, just as D'Arcy chose to keep at a safe distance, while he could, from the field of war with himself that he might have whatever he wished, so did he angrily say when conscience arose, "Whose business is it anyhow? I only take the consequences if I am wrong;" forgetting in his youthful wisdom that he, like everyone else, is part also of some one else.

And ah, what pain is in that word "forget" and in that expression, "I forgot". Yes, this highly favoured young man forgot and kept on forgetting, that up among the Gatineau Hills, all things were not as they used to be. For it is one of the

terrors as well as one of the charms of nature that everything in her dominion must go her way of change. And so it happened that one day, standing before the mirror, Jane Conyers, wife of S. Conyers, Esq., and mother of Mr. D'Arcy Conyers of Montreal, while dressing her long, heavy, waving, auburn hair, observed that it was shot through and through with silver. And one standing near enough might have heard her say quite unwittingly, dear woman: "I wish D'Arcy would write more often: God grant everything goes well with him and that he goes well with God."

At first after leaving home D'Arcy wrote with considerable frequency and regularity, and then his letters became shorter and were replete with reasons of business for their extreme brevity. The two visits a year of his poverty days soon gave place to one, and even this must needs be of short duration owing to the duties which fell ever more heavily upon the shoulder of one rising in the world of affairs. And the little presents, once sent the mother out of his meagre income, were now overlooked because of the rush of business. And for another reason as well—Betsy of course! Betsy must not be denied the satisfaction of her little whims: D'Arcy's pride, his father's pride for that matter, in doing the big thing rather than the right thing, made it obligatory to shower favours upon his butterfly sweetheart.

Champ D'Mars! D'Arcy Conyers, sword in hand on Champ D'Mars! Not he! Not yet anyhow. It was easier for him to go about Champ D'Mars, at most to be a spectator there of others'

fighths; but to go there for personal conflict, to draw sword there, yea and draw blood there, and perhaps to lose somewhat of that precious fluid there! Oh, no, not D'Arcy Conyers, not yet anyhow. And as days went by the sense of duty grew weaker for want of habit with which to arm itself; and the light in D'Arcy's little lamp grew fainter and less steady; indeed it might have gone out altogether for aught he cared.

And gentle-natured Mrs. Conyers—so very gentle, so prayerful, so sweet, an yet so sad—bore up heroically, and even lovingly, in spite of what she knew and what she feared, till one day a letter came to her in the handwriting of the absent son. When with joy it was opened, a shock awaited her anxious and longing eyes, for it began, “Dear Mater;” and Mrs. Conyers, wife of S. Conyers, Esq., and mother of Mr. D'Arcy Conyers of Montreal, read no further for awhile. Holding the epistle in her hand she circled her arms before her on the table, that very same table at which we beheld her plying her needle in the first chapter of this story and laid down her head upon them and wept in bitterness of spirit saying: “Oh D'Arcy, D'Arcy, has it come to this, that ‘mater’ is now expressive of your feeling for me, and not any longer that fond old word ‘mother’ with all its warmth and tenderness?”

Next morning as she stood again before the looking-glass to comb out her wealth of auburn hair, the sun was bright upon the window pane, bright also upon the auburn hair, which, reflecting itself from the gleaming mirror, showed more of silver

than before, and the brow was more contracted from the night of worry. And yet, let us not condemn D'Arcy too severely—his offence is great indeed, but not greater perhaps nor so very unlike our own.

And this young man had other little characteristics of which the reader must also gain some knowledge. D'Arcy if not strikingly handsome, was agreeable to look upon; how indeed could he be otherwise having such a mother and such a well-knit and robust type of father? And it may be said also that he was not without a considerable share of his father's vanity, as well as of his mother's attractive qualities. The net result was, that on the whole, he was pleased with his own stature and his own countenance. For another thing, he was very proud of his black hair, it being very rich and like his mother's showing an agreeable tendency to curl. And he had a graceful black moustache, now he was twenty-one, which likewise was of some gratification to his feelings. Both hair and moustache, therefore, must be accorded the utmost care; and hence their owner must be a frequenter of none but the finest barber shops in the city, from which, once a week at least, he came forth with his hair trimmed and brushed to perfection and his black moustache waxed and turned with the utmost nicety.

In truth D'Arcy became quite a favorite with the barber, for he not only manifested interest in his art, especially as applied to himself, but never left the shop without rewarding the dexterous artist for his unusual skill. The shoe-black

also knew him full well, and as Mr. D'Arcy Conyers entered the barber's chair, he would rush forward box in hand and begin to apply his brushes without so much as enquiring whether they were desired or not. "Mr. D'Arcy Conyers, a shine?" Why ask, indeed? A shine, a shave, a shampoo, a hair cut and the black moustache waxed—why of a certainty! It ill becomes a man of his importance to appear without these comforts of life; even if the little presents for "Mater" up among the Gatineau Hills have to be forgotten and omitted through severe press of business and response to the rush of life.

This young man, so particular about his appearance, was possessed nevertheless of much more ability than his vanity would suggest; for surely personal vanity is of all human foibles the most lacking in grounds of reason. In truth D'Arcy was gifted with a bright intelligence, as his high broad forehead abundantly indicated. And yet, strange to relate, as so often happens, instead of revealing to him the shallowness of pride, it became the occasion of it and its twin sister selfishness. And if he inherited strength and agility as well as vanity from his father, his mother accorded him the gift of her own great brown eyes, and lips which betokened silence, and a great power of secrecy.

As a consequence of this double possession of quick intelligence and tight lips, D'Arcy's work was no effort to him, and what went on in his subtle mind was easily kept a mystery from all but himself.

Nor must it be inferred from this that D'Arcy was not a companionable fellow; on the contrary he was generously endowed in this direction; but it was the control and exercise of this gift which was remarkable in him. Men spoke of him as a fine fellow as well as a clever one, but never did companions, however intimate, gain his full confidence, though many a one thought he possessed it. He never gave his full mind to anyone. Either he could not trust others, knowing how far he was himself from meriting another's repose of faith, or he had set himself to drain the cup of selfish desire to its last dregs and was ashamed of his intention, as what man indeed might not well be. Whatever the reason for the thing, there it was. D'Arcy never laid bare his soul to any human being, much less to God in honest confession; and so the compass of life, for all appearances to the contrary, pointed more and more directly toward himself and what he wanted, as the lode star of his existence.

D'Arcy read much when alone, and for a man in his circumstances had acquired some knowledge of the standard authors. In particular, he had a fondness for history, and on his book shelves one might see volumes of modern history side by side with well bound copies of the works of great novelists and poets. And D'Arcy was an interesting fellow in conversation, because his memory served him well, his tongue was fluent, and his mind quick to see the fitness of something he had met with in the course of his reading to throw light upon this phase or that of the matter under dis-

cussion. Moreover he had a fine gift of relating amusing stories when he wished to exercise it, which made him a popular chap in any company of his fellows. On all subjects he would freely converse, but never by any chance were his auditors admitted into the secrets locked up in his own thoughts. Even Ben Lucas was not permitted to peer in through so much as the keyhole.

It has been remarked in this narrative that D'Arcy Conyers was wont to make the most of his appearance; and it was even so. If the barber was a friend of his and aided in the matter of his curly black hair and fine black moustache, what are tailors for, if not to measure and cut and fit, to make and press with the last degree of care and skill, the clothes of such young vanities as D'Arcy Conyers? And D'Arcy wore the latest and the most expensive hat also. Moreover, his shirts and collars were made to order for the very good reason that he could more freely satisfy his fancy in the matter of material and at the same time secure the exact size and fit to set off his person to advantage. And D'Arcy stood on the best terms with all the high class furnishers, for he chose with great care and taste the best of imported goods for suits and overcoats and wore them with a propriety and smartness of manner which was gratifying to the vanity of the manufacturer.

When D'Arcy Conyers travelled for his firm, as he not infrequently did during his later years in Montreal, or went for a week-end to some place of attraction, he naturally deported himself as one should who had a position in the business world to

maintain; a chair for example, on the train, a grip of the highest quality with initials stamped in gold upon it, a generous tip to the black porter, a complete absorption in his magazine, to the ignoring of all other passengers as though to say, "ordinary humanity and myself"; and when the conductor entered he merely handed the ticket to him en passant. At his destination the red caps came flocking at a snap of his finger, the porter took his checks for his luggage, and Mr. D'Arey Conyers of Montreal was most politely conducted to the comfortable room reserved by wire for his convenience.

Champ D'Mars! Why talk of Champ D'Mars just now when things are going so well? It rather spoils the fun; let desire have its fling, let vanity thrive on vanity; why remember, when to do so is disconcerting? Why be a poor man when it is so delightful to be a rich one? After all a little of one's own vain imagination and a good deal of some one else's money cover-up many of the unpleasant realities of life—for the time being.

Why trouble about Champ D'Mars, you thoughtless self-centred young man? Up among the silent Gatineau Hills you may find an answer; and in a certain office very well-known to you, some one is working out, who is quite as clever as you Mr. D'Arey Conyers, an answer of another kind.

CHAPTER XIX.

DESPERATION

IT was Sunday morning, two years after the meeting of Ben Lucas at the crossing of old Craig Street. There was silence in the city streets, save for the distant rumble of the street cars and the occasional rattling of the milk carts; and there was silence and slumber within the "House with the Brass Knocker"; and there was quiet among the Gatineau Hills, for the birds had grown weary of singing and were gathering in flocks to fly away.

Mrs. Painter was five years older than when D'Arcy first took lodgings with her at "The Burnside". While still in good health and spirits she experienced a considerable lessening of her powers of endurance; hence she was not about at an early hour on Sunday mornings. The cook and the maid, both French Roman Catholics, had gone to early Mass. As for all the other inmates of "The Burnside", D'Arcy included, they were slumbering in comfortable rooms fresh with the cool night air of early September.

D'Arcy had been at the theatre the evening before where he and some companions occupied a box. Having drunk freely at dinner, D'Arcy fell asleep more than once during the performance

and had to be goaded to sensibility by one of his friends. Lucas was in the audience with a pal of his, and the friends encountered one another as they were leaving the theatre. They exchanged a few words of greeting, and on reaching the door turned aside to drink and play poker at the Savoy for the remainder of the evening.

Champagne had been D'Arcy's master for some time. He was in debt on every side; he had taken money from the firm, he had broken with Betsy Turner; he saw ruin staring him in the face, and half drunk as he was, he decided to match his wits against those of Ben and his companions in the hope of extricating himself from his ruinous financial situation. Had he been sober, he would have been now as often before more than a match for his opponents. But he was far from this happy state; he was drinking constantly and was overtaxed with a feeling of coming disaster. His last fifty dollars was gone before the game had proceeded an hour. D'Arcy was reckless, drank more freely, soon fell over paralyzed, and only came to his senses long after midnight as the cabby drew up at "The Burnside", where with a remarkable effort of will he pulled himself together and found his way to the spacious room on the second floor of his boarding house to which he had moved in the early days of his prosperity.

It thus came to pass that on Sunday morning he resolved to lie in bed; he was sick, he would sleep it off. As the church bells rang out for morning service, the hideous vision took shape before his mind; how he had spent the night, no money, the

stolen money, the annual audit coming on in a week—ruination staring him in the face. He was cool and clear-headed now as usual, and he lay and planned.

Would he go back, face the manager and confess? No, never! It meant dismissal, probably arrest. Could he borrow? No, not a third part of it. He was now thoroughly in the net.

Would he flee the country? Or—or—the horror loomed up—would he destroy himself? Would he take with his own hand the life so damned, yet so sweet? No, he would not destroy himself, save in the last extremity. He would flee the country. But how?—for said he, “I have not a cent left.” To escape therefore was impossible. “What’s the use anyhow? They will catch me if I do, it’s all up!”

“I have often gone to the river on Sundays,” thought he. “This evening I shall go and the canoe will upset in the dark—an accident—headlines in the paper and a grave in the waters of the St. Lawrence—and that’s the end of D’Arcy Conyers. I never thought I would be fool enough or man enough to drown myself. But now if it must be the river or the prison, I say the river!”

That evening as dusk was coming on he left “The Burnside”, took a street car to Victoria Bridge, walked across it, though it is very long, and, on the other side, was descending to where the boats were kept for hire when he saw sitting by the river on a big log a man of seventy years or more, his grey head uncovered and his hat lying by him on the ground. He was evidently viewing

the broad stream and the dark line of the mighty bridge, and the distant city where the lights were beginning to show themselves, and the western sky all red and pink and rose colour.

At the sound of D'Arcy's footsteps he stood up and turned towards him, but spoke not a word, as though afraid to break the silence; he made no delay but reverted to look on the scene before him apparently fearing to miss one instant of its charm. D'Arcy perceived him to be a man of large frame, wearing country clothes and having a long grey beard. He drew nearer with full intention of requesting a canoe, for he thought the man to be the keeper of boats; but on approaching, he too fell into silence, partly because of the scene, but also because the old man gave no sign of speaking but kept his eyes steadily on the flowing river, the bridge, the far off city and the glowing sky. D'Arcy now saw that there was a faint tint of light on the aged features, a reflection of the glory in the sky. This quite sealed his lips—speech was not the language of this spot, so he lifted his own hat, poor boy, stood for a moment in terrible agony of soul, yet in silence, then turned and fled back up the path to the landing stage by the entrance to the bridge and caught the first car to the city, saying to himself the while in the depths of his soul, and at times audibly also, “White Hairs! Poor old White Hairs!”

Thus unexpectedly diverted from his foolish purpose—what next? Would he confess? No, not that, but flight.

Having decided to follow this course he lost no

time in reaching "The Burnside". At the door with the brass knocker he met Lucas, dressed in his finest suit and silk hat, on the point of going out for the night's enjoyment. D'Arcy was not attired with his usual care; moreover he was unshaven and looked wretchedly, having eaten but little and taken nothing stimulating to drink since the night before.

"Hello, D'Arcy," exclaimed Lucas, with a half guilty, half friendly smile, "what has brought you here at this time?"

D'Arcy replied firmly and without a suggestion of pleasure on his face or in his voice, "Come in, Ben, for a moment and I'll tell you."

"I'm sorry, old man," said Lucas, suspicious that he might want to borrow money, "but I'm in a great hurry to keep an engagement; I must be off."

D'Arcy was persistent, however, much to Ben's displeasure, and there was nothing left for him but to return. They entered the open door at once, ascended to the second floor and turned aside into D'Arcy's room, and there without delay the wretched young man began relating the straits he was in at the office and how he had come near to suicide.

Ben listened, his cold sharp features unmoved and his eye glancing furtively from D'Arcy to the floor and back to D'Arcy again, thinking only of how he might escape from the ordeal in the shortest space of time.

"Now then, Ben, will you lend me fifty dollars?"

I am about to flee the city; I will make good and send you back the money."

"No! I have won it fairly and I need it. You are putting up a bluff, Conyers, and you'll not get a damn sou from me. I want this for to-morrow."

So saying he replaced his top hat and turned towards the door of the apartment through which a ray of light, the only one in the room, entered from the lamp in the hall. D'Arcy, however, sprang forward, shot past Lucas, reached the door first, locked it, and put the key in his pocket. Lucas swore an oath, for he saw that he was in a trap. D'Arcy said not a word but struck a match, lighted the gas jet above the bureau in the corner and after standing for an instant in its red glow adjusting the flame, he turned sharply to Lucas who was yet in the darkness near the door.

"I mean to have that money, Ben Lucas," said he quietly, "there's no bluff in me to-night. I'm out for business."

Lucas could not believe his ears nor his eyes, for D'Arcy spoke without passion and the light was too dim to reveal the determined pallor of his countenance.

"There is no one in the house," said D'Arcy, approaching Lucas, "the inmates have gone out the devil knows where. I'll have the money I want, or leave you a dead man, Ben. That's it in a nutshell." Every word came forth from his lips driven by pent-up wrath.

"I give you one more minute and then I choke the wind out of you and the money too!"

Lucas had never seen D'Arcy show such spirit

and could not believe the truth of what he was looking upon, yet before he could decide what to do, D'Arcy was at his throat and Lucas went to the floor with a bang, the vice-like fingers of the desperate man about his windpipe. The grip was that of a man whose one hope of life lay in that hold. Lucas struggled in vain but D'Arcy's knee was quickly upon his chest, and both hands about his neck. He gasped an oath; D'Arcy lifted his head and whacked it against the floor.

“The money, or death, Lucas; which will you have?”

Lucas now realized that he was in the grip that meant what it signified—death. D'Arcy released his fingers for a moment to give him a chance to speak, though he kept his hands in position and his knees upon his chest.

“What have you to say, Lucas?”

“I say—old—man—” he gasped, trying with all his might to get to his feet, but it was useless for the vice was upon him instantly.

D'Arcy was now enraged. “You accomplice of hell,” he cried, “three seconds and your brains will scatter on the floor, if I hang for it! You blackleg! Don't call me ‘old man’ you damned scoundrel!”

One moment again he released the grip.

“I give it,” cried out Lucas and D'Arcy leaped to his feet.

“Get up then and fork it out—fifty dollars of it—one hundred dollars of it, if you have it?”

Ben staggered to his feet, his long hair tossed, his tie and coat torn, and putting his hand into his

hip pocket he pulled out five ten dollar bills and passed them to D'Arcy without an utterance.

D'Arcy stuffed the money quickly into his pocket and set to putting a few things into his travelling bag. Suddenly he turned to Lucas and said: "One thing more, Lucas. That mouth of yours must be shut—not a word. Promise me that or I'll smash it now so that it will never talk."

Having secured the money and the promise, D'Arcy completed the packing of his things, turned the key in the door, passed out, disappeared, and was gone.

Up among the Gatineau Hills the autumn tints were coming on the trees; the autumn clouds were throwing deep shadows on the mountain tops, on the yellow grain fields, and the rich green pastures; the birds had ceased their singing and were gathering in flocks to fly away; S. Conyers was harvesting his grain, with the help of his boys who remained with him at the farm; and mother Conyers with a little more of stoop in her shoulders, and a little more of grey in her hair, was still living the life of the spirit world while performing the humdrum duties of this, with a smile on her beautiful face for all at home and a prayer on the altar of her heart for all abroad.

CHAPTER XX.

THE GREAT SACRIFICE

THE room was not a large one and yet to S. Conyers and his wife it seemed to be of great size; nor was it particularly rich in its appointments, though to their eyes it bore the marks of luxury; neither was it a bright room that morning, nor was it so any other morning in the year, for it lay on the north side of a large grey stone building on Notre Dame Street! it was the Police Court or Court de Police of the City of Montreal.

For a time Mr. and Mrs. Conyers were mercifully granted to be alone; for they had to make a decision—one which stirred the blood of the stout-hearted chief of detectives, in whose office they were now seated, and caused him out of kindness, to step into an adjoining room while they deliberated; for said he: “It will be hard for them to surrender their home, yet should they do so, it will save us the trouble and the expense, and themselves the notoriety, of following up their absconding son.” So he left them to themselves awhile.

We have already looked upon the beautiful features of Jane Conyers and should have recognized her even in the strange environment of the police office, but that her features were not quite the

same in appearance as they used to be; five years, and D'Arcy, have added grey hairs and wrinkles. She is careworn, and tired from sleepless nights, and the effects of what was for her a long journey in the train; her eyes seemed weary; the flush on her cheek is there as of old though its freshness has gone; and there is a wonderful peace spreading over her countenance in spite of her strange and repulsive surroundings.

Mr. Conyers is a country man to be sure; his dress, hair, beard, sunburned face all speak of this; but withal he possesses an intelligent and even handsome countenance, for his eyes are more alert than is usual in one of his quiet and dreamy occupation. A readiness of speech acquired in municipal matters characterizes him; forced by circumstances to do the day's work of clearing and grubbing, yet he is not a rustic in knowledge or intelligence, and, more than by any other admirable qualities, he is marked by determination and courage.

The shock which at first stunned him was now passing off. The strange humiliation to which he was subjected at being in a detective's office on account of his son, the shame that covered one who never owed but paid, these and other painful experiences had well nigh spent their force and his pride and fighting spirit were asserting themselves again.

"Well, mother, what'll we do?" he enquired, when they were alone; and as he put the question he left his chair and began pacing about the office. "The time has come to decide. They'll soon be

in again. I leave it to you, Jane. I made the home for you, and for you I'll keep it against all comers. The boy has done wrong—he must be punished, but I'll not permit you to want for his sake. They can't take it—the devils—D'Arcy is of age and there never was a thing against the property since we located it—not a thing! But if it will satisfy these sharks—just as you say, Jane."

So spoke S. Conyers as he walked excitedly about the room in the detective's office. His wife, with countenance drawn and smileless, yet sweetly gentle, looked up at him and said: "Father, dear, there's only one thing to do! Our poor foolish boy must not go to prison; and a detective is a detective and they will get him and bring him back and the disgrace for life will be on him and on all the other children too, and in the end we'll have to give the place to save him."

S. Conyers knew his wife well enough; this was her final decision. She could not be moved though starvation looked her in the face.

"All right, Mother," said he in angry mood, "but if you leave it to me, I'll see them to hell first!"

"Whist, Father, whist!"

"These two hands have kept you these thirty years and they'll keep you still, or my name is not Conyers."

He felt just twenty years younger as he spoke these words and his wife appeared to him dearer and more beautiful than on her wedding day. He perceived that to give up the farm and not let

these greyhounds, as he called them, dog the boy to the ground would give his wife the least pain, and that, for all his superficiality, was becoming a great matter with S. Conyers. So he knocked at the door of the private room in which the detective and D'Arcy's defrauded employer were holding secret converse.

It opened immediately, and Mr. Conyers, erect as in youth stood before it and said: "We have decided." At once in stepped the detective, a tall man with a heavy dark moustache, and small grey eyes under heavy brows. His expression was keen but not unkindly, and when he spoke there was a softness in his voice acquired through long experience in sad cases.

Behind him as he entered was a smaller man, with a brown and hempy looking beard, close-cropped except the bit on the chin which he kept pulling and twisting. He had high cheek bones and sunken brown eyes. Good women have an instinctive aversion to bad men; Mrs. Conyers turned from the sight of this man with revulsion. He was the head of D'Arcy's firm, and his name was Elias Shrimpy.

Mr. Conyers went forward to the table, grasped the pen in his rough but honest hand, and said, "Where's the spot for the name?"

"You have decided to give the mortgage then?" enquired Mr. Shrimpy with repressed delight, twisting his brown hempy beard.

"Thank the wife for it," exclaimed S. Conyers. "I'd fight the devil out of you first! Where's the spot for the name?" enquired he again. And

he scratched down his signature, thus ridding himself in a moment, for the sake of his wayward son, the cherished homestead won through a lifetime of toil and saving.

Mr. Shrimpy witnessed the act with satisfaction and rose to fix his own signature to the agreement when an idea occurred to him. "Oh, by the way," said he, "it would be better, a little safer, you see, to get Mrs. Conyers' signature also. There might be some dispute, you see, about the wife's right. In our province. . . ." he was going on to say when Mr. Conyers ejaculated:

"Never! You d——— scoundrel, never!"

"Oh, anything, anything," exclaimed Mrs. Conyers. "We want it settled." And she rose from where she was sitting, went to the table, picked up the pen and was about to put down her name, when a sharp knock came unexpectedly to the door and all eyes were turned in that direction. It opened as by a spring, and in stepped—Mr. Benson.

His face was anxious. Mr. Benson was one of those princes of the House of David, who sharing the usual determination of business men to get on in the world, as the phrase goes, had yet his eye on the grim realities which like the higher world itself break in unexpectedly upon the life we live. Consequently he had a tender and gentle heart. Gold and silver were to him not real things but were representative of reality, a kind of outward and visible sign of an unseen something which endures. There was a balance in the man's mind and consequently in his making and his

spending, or his getting and giving as he preferred to call it, for said he, "We really do not make money—and no man should spend—he should get it and give it."

He was a tall man as I have observed and was spare of body; his thin face often had something fainter than a smile upon it; he wore a moustache which was black or nearly so; he had a fine forehead overhanging his alert blue eyes, and it was getting higher from year to year through the thinning out of his black hair.

On entering the room everyone greeted him at the same instant. Mrs. Conyers said, "Oh, Mr. Benson!" and for the moment dropped the pen from her fingers.

Mr. Conyers offered his hand, but spoke not a word; the wound to his manly pride was too great.

Elias Shrimpy also knew Mr. Benson and greeted him with the respect which a man of sound and honest business methods always commands among those who know him and his ways. Shrimpy twisted his rag of a whisker and, with an air of great familiarity extended his hand, which was taken coldly enough by Mr. Benson. The detective said, "Good morning, Mr. Benson, and nothing more, and that gentleman replied by saying:

"May I interrupt your proceedings just for a moment?" And then he turned to Mr. Conyers and said: "I have just heard of the unfortunate affair through one of D'Arcy friends and have come to see if I can be of any service to you in the matter."

Shrimpy gave his beard a twist, peered through

his thick-lensed spectacles and interjected, "It's happily settled already, Mr. Benson."

"Yes, yes, I have no doubt; but in what form, may I enquire?"

"Mr. Conyers has signed the paper mortgaging his homestead," replied Shrimpy; "Only as a guarantee, you see, no danger in the proceeding, and" he added quickly, "Mrs. Conyers is about to attest her willingness by affixing her name as well. Pity indeed, that it must be so, but it will protect the boy."

"Your pity be damned!" ejaculated S. Conyers, whose indignation was again asserting itself.

"Oh, Sam, what's the use?" cried out Mrs. Conyers.

"I regret, Mr. Conyers," continued Mr. Benson, "that through my absence from the city I have received information concerning this matter only this morning. I hope I am not yet too late to help."

"Oh, the agreement is signed," exclaimed Shrimpy.

"For the full amount?" asked Mr. Benson.

"For the full amount," replied Elias Shrimpy, "five thousand dollars with interest at seven per cent."

The exacting of the interest on the securities seemed to Mr. Benson lacking in generosity—exasperating to a degree.

"Shrimpy," said he, "if you had looked after your business as closely when D'Arey was with you as you are doing in this instance, he would not have taken your money without your knowl-

edge. You are not free from blame in this matter and you are acting in a heartless manner." Mr. Benson's indignation manifested itself only in his eyes and voice while he spoke—and Elias Shrimpy was silent, curled up, and set to twisting his whiskers with desperation.

Turning to Mr. Conyers, Mr. Benson said, "It is not necessary to endanger your home for this amount. D'Arcy will turn up. We will trust him. Your word to help me out will be sufficient and I will settle this matter for the time being. If Mr. Shrimpy will make a draft on me for the amount promised, the deal is closed."

"God bless you!" exclaimed Mrs. Conyers, breaking into tears.

"I will accept this on one condition;" interrupted S. Conyers, rising from his place and approaching Mr. Benson, "You take the place as guarantee till every cent is paid."

"No, no, Mr. Conyers," said Mr. Benson, "your word is enough."

"But I insist, till every cent is paid," repeated Mr. Conyers.

"Well, we can settle that between ourselves," replied Mr. Benson.

"Here Shrimpy, is the money; better have a cheque and be done with it," and sitting down to the table Mr. Benson drew a cheque book from his pocket and, under the eye of Shrimpy, was filling it in for the amount when that individual said:

"It's for five thousand dollars in full exactly," and gave his beard an extra twist.

Mr. Benson stopped for a moment and without lifting his pen from the paper looked at Shrimpy with disgust, and then went on again with his writing.

The cheque was made out and passed over, the law satisfied, and Mr. Benson called a cab and drove off with Mr. and Mrs. Conyers to his home on the river.

CHAPTER XXI.

SHADOWED

D'ARCY was now a fugitive from justice, and well-nigh penniless although he had earned and stolen such goodly sums and had won so much in gambling with cards and at the horse races. Moreover he was ill at ease because of the law, for as he said within himself, "Of a dead certainty I shall be pursued by that hawk-eyed detective, Chief McCaskil, the blood-hound of absconders."

These reflections, however, gave him but little real anxiety, such was his confidence in his own wits to get him some money for food and to dodge the arm of the law. And it must be acknowledged that there was scarce a shadow of remorse in this young renegade's soul for the employer whom he had robbed, or yet for his parents among the forgotten hills of the Gatineau, whose pride and confidence in him were now for the first time shattered and their stout hearts pierced through and through with the arrows of grief. But nature has rough ways with her offspring when gentle ones will not avail and the time for D'Arcy to learn this lesson was drawing on.

The clock above the arch in the Union Depot at Toronto showed the hour to be but ten minutes

short of six, on a hot evening of late September, two days after his flight from his crimes in Montreal. There were applicants for tickets standing in line before the wicket of both Railway Companies, awaiting their turn with tense impatience. D'Arcy was in one of them, with four persons in advance of him, a circumstance which left him time to let his eye wander carelessly from person to person and from one point of interest to another.

Suddenly, he noticed a pair of grey eyes fixed upon him from a distance of several paces off. They were those of a tall man with a heavy fair moustache and slouch hat, who was among the crowd of ticket purchasers at the other wicket. D'Arcy was startled somewhat, but his suspicion died out again in a moment for he had seen the man in the hotel rotunda, where, apparently, like D'Arcy himself, he had been a guest and was now returning home. Moreover, there was no reason to be anxious; for Ben Lucas would certainly not divulge the secret at least for several days. His fears having been thus quieted, D'Arcy after waiting his turn, at last got his ticket and with grip in hand hurried off through the crowds.

At the exit from the depot, D'Arcy showed his ticket to the gateman who called out, "Sudbury, track number six," and was about to go through when to his great anxiety he lifted his eyes and saw coming towards him the tall man with the slouch hat and the fair moustache. "Could it be possible," asked D'Arcy of himself, as he hastened two steps at a time down the iron stair case

leading to track number six. "Could it be possible, that he is interested in my destination, and that he heard the gateman call out "Sudbury?"

Again the unpleasant thought was dismissed, for was not the object of his suspicion going in the opposite direction? Possibly he had forgotten something or it might be that he was not leaving the city at present and was returning to the hotel at once.

However these things might be, D'Arey entered the first-class coach and finding it thronged with passengers he went on into the smoker and appropriated the last seat in that compartment. He was there but a moment at most when he heard the conductor on the platform cry out, "All aboard!" and at once the train began to move slowly forward. He lighted his pipe, a new corn cob one he had brought as part of his disguise, drew an evening paper from his pocket and began to read, then folded it into a comfortable size, and, after a second or two, refolded it, scanning between times the face of every fellow-passenger in the compartment.

The man with the slouch hat and the fair moustache was not there, that was evident. And feeling decidedly more at ease on this account he settled down to his reading and the full enjoyment of his pipe. Suddenly the train drew up at West Toronto. D'Arey glanced through the window and saw at first only the multitude and was quiet of mind. A moment passed in the puffing of his corn cob, then the conductor gave his usual call "All aboard!" and D'Arey glancing again

through the window to his right, saw, to his horror, the man with the fair moustache, just stepping on the train. The sight penetrated his soul with a sharp pain as of a ray of light on an over tired eye-nerve. He was the more concerned by observing that the slouch hat had been exchanged for a small cap, and that a grey raincoat now covered the stranger's tall form down to his feet. Presently he appeared at the door of the smoker, threw the curtain aside, glanced round and passed on. His grey eye caught sight of D'Arcy looking as innocently as possible at his evening paper.

It does not stir comfortable feelings to find that one is being inspected by any pair of eyes; but for one in D'Arcy's position to come under the glare of such penetrating glances as those of Inspector Jack Lanigan of the Toronto Police was to experience a sensation of a most disagreeable character. D'Arcy was now convinced that he was shadowed and knew that Ben Lucas had played him false one last time. At once, therefore, he began judging what course he might best follow under the circumstances.

In a blink of time he concluded that his only hope lay in taking advantage of the apparent uncertainty of the detective as to whether this was indeed his man or not. It was not to be wondered at that there were such doubts in the mind of Lanigan, for pictures of D'Arcy had not yet been sent to the police of the outside cities and consequently Lanigan had only telegraphic descriptions to go upon. Moreover, D'Arcy had

very successfully altered his appearance by cutting off his wavy black hair and removing altogether his graceful black moustache.

Thought D'Arey to himself, "If he were as certain of my identity as I am that he is a detective the game would be up. He is on this train to study me. He thinks I am going to Sudbury and will be careful not to arouse my suspicions for a time. I must act before he makes up his mind."

The train blew its whistle and presently drew up at a station. D'Arey was the only one in the smoking car who moved. He looked about, put his pipe into his pocket, took his grip in hand and entered the car proper, feeling certain of a seat therein after the exit of some of his fellow-travellers.

Down the aisle, at a distance of about two-thirds the car's length, his quick eye lighted upon the man with the fair moustache who was settling down again in his seat after observing the going out of the passengers. Finding two vacant seats, one behind the other, near the front of the car D'Arey sat down in one of them and threw forward the back of the other apparently with a view to securing his comfort for the night, in reality, to think out his plan of action should time be given him; for he had determined to leave the train with the least possible delay.

He was not ignorant of the region, at least not wholly so, for he had been studying the railway map and picking up information for just such a predicament as that in which he now found himself. Moreover, he had once passed that way

when going into Muskoka for a week-end in the days of his prosperity, and he remembered a great swamp low down among the hills where the train drew up to take water; it could not be far away, thought he; this would be the spot for his escape if fortune should favour him for an hour or so.

He therefore threw himself down in a comfortable position as though to sleep, but in fact for the purpose of clearing up the details of his plan of escape. To shield his eyes from the glare of the light he drew his hat over his face. Presently he felt a hand on his shoulder; it was the conductor, who ejaculated the question, "You are for Sudbury, aren't you?" D'Arcy saw at once the point of the enquiry. It was suggested by the detective and he answered in a sharp indignant tone of voice as though angry at being aroused from sleep. "You ought to know that when you got my ticket—you had better write it down so you'll remember it."

When the train had gone forward a matter of ten miles or so, D'Arcy had completed his scheme. At the right moment he would make a pretence of going to the wash room. He had a couple of books in a small leather case, for he had intended passing himself off as an agent in the country parts. This might be taken by the detective for his dressing case. He would have to sacrifice his portmanteau and his greatcoat, but what of that, his present exigency considered. Fortunately there was no mark of identification on them for they were received in exchange for his own at a second-hand store only the day before.

Presently he felt the train going down grade, and he peered through the window to ascertain if perchance it were the swampy country. After running for a few minutes the express began slowing down, and D'Arcy, leather case in hand, went forward to the washroom, leaving his valise, greatcoat, and hat, on the seat where he had been reclining.

The detective was quite thrown off guard, partly because of the information so recently obtained from the conductor, and partly owing to D'Arcy's having left his belongings where he had been sitting.

The train now pulled up quietly, and D'Arcy sure-footed as a cat, swung himself down to the roadbed on the side opposite that on which the detective was sitting; he staggered to the bottom of the roadside ditch; fortunately for his comfort it was of no great depth and was without water. In a breath or two he steadied his nerve, drew himself out of the ditch, made for the wire fence with all speed, vaulted over it and dropped with a thud upon the soft ground on the other side, and there lay motionless in the underbrush.

D'Arcy was now secure in the edge of the swampy woods and the pitchy night, while the detective impatiently awaiting his return from the washroom was left to snap his fingers and curse his luck.

CHAPTER XXII.

BLACK DARKNESS AND THE BARK OF A DOG

THE stroke was well-timed, as it happened for at the moment of his safe lodgement in the thicket beyond the ditch and the wire fence, the engine puffed, the red-windowed coaches moved forward, the rails clicked, the wheels gave the low sound of rolling, and the train soon disappeared in the darkness, leaving D'Arcy uncertain as to what mind he was of, so great was the loneliness which now surrounded him.

D'Arcy was ever for making the best of things when put to it, and no circumstance so prompted the stirring of this young renegade's wits as one which rendered necessary the saving of his own precious skin. He had escaped one danger, he would now set himself to overcome another.

For a moment or two, the loud puffing of the engine resounding through the forest, kept his attention, but it grew fainter as distance increased and soon it died away and was gone out of hearing altogether.

Then fell the terrible stillness of the deep woods at night. D'Arcy looked up; there were no stars, the sky was scarcely less black than the forest; he thought he felt a drop of rain on his bare hand and raised his face to the sky to gain further proof—

there was no doubt; the drops now began falling more numerous. Soon there was a pattering on the leafage, and then the hissing sound of light rain through the forest.

When D'Arcy had continued motionless in the night for a space of five minutes or thereabout the whistle blew far up the line for a crossing; this brought him to his feet at once; he would follow the track till he should come to the spot and do what seemed best if lucky enough to get there. Accordingly he set forth, on the moment, got him through the wire fence, over the ditch and up the bank as best he could, and, once he found the gravel and the ties under his feet he went forward stepping as quickly as possible lest he should not reach a dwelling in time to see a light in the window.

The rain was now falling with the utmost disregard of D'Arcy's unhappy condition—his great-coat was upon the fleeing train, his valise there also and consequently he had not a scrap of clothing to change into, from wet to dry—not so much as a pair of socks. He had gone but a short distance upon his journey when he observed a deepening in the darkness on either side of the way. He stopped at once to judge the cause of the change. Though he strained his eyes peering into the empty blackness he could detect nothing, not even the faintest outline of forest against the sky and there was no longer the sound of rain falling on the leafage. He shuffled about with his feet on the road in front of him and found that the ties had changed their character from flat with

gravel between them, to square with narrow open spaces. Certainly there was a gully in the darkness and he was already upon the bridging over it. He raised his hand to his ear and leaned his head to the right, listening intently for any sound; there came up from the blackness the unmistakable voice of running waters.

“Well,” said he to himself, in an audible voice, as it were to give himself courage, “this is a nice mess; a strange country, pitchy night, rain, the only hope of a lodging is beyond this bridge with a gully and a river and the Lord knows what below it; and worst of all a train may come down at any moment to grind me to powder!”

D’Arcy now dropped upon his knees, not to pray, however, but to crawl forward as best he could and without loss of time lest a train should come one way or the other and he upon the bridge. The hazard of crossing was great indeed, but somewhat less than any other danger which now confronted him; so, on the railway bridge, in the night, above the gully and the torrent, D’Arcy, on all fours set forward on his journey.

He had been crawling along but a few moments, though it seemed to him an eternity, so great was his fear, when to his utter dismay his ear caught the low rumbling of a distant train. It could not be that from which he had made his escape—it must be the oncoming of another.

He travelled with what speed he could, still on hands and knees, fearing to stand up and try running lest he should stumble, and having no less dread of stepping aside lest he should fall over the

bridge and go headlong into the gully and the stream. Presently there came to his ear the louder rolling of the train, then the whistle blew for the crossing and he knew that another minute at most would end matters for him; still there was no choice but to go forward, which he did regardless of the bruising of his hands and knees. The clicking of the rails was now distinctly audible. His heart sank and an exclamation, "God!" escaped his lips; the next instant his hands came down again on the gravelled roadbed, indicating that the bridge was past, and he sprang to his feet and then to the roadside. The glare of the headlight was now upon him and in sheer fright as the train swept by he stumbled, and tumbled down the sandy embankment and only came to a halt a distance of twenty feet below the level of the bridge. Fortunately he had secured the leather case containing his books to the back strap of his trousers before beginning this venture, and there it held and was safe. His cap did not fall off, so tightly did it fit his closely cropped head. Now at the bottom of the ditch below the embankment he was soon trying to collect his scattered thoughts and form some new resolution. As he dwelt on his predicament the humour of it occurred to his mind and he could have laughed aloud. "Well," said he, lighting a cigarette, "there is only one thing for it—I must start over again," and he did so that moment.

Time was now most precious, as he very well knew, though he had often thrown it away as a thing of no account. So he set at once to climbing

the bank before him in the darkness. At every step he went deep into the sand and his shoes took in much gravel which gave him discomfort enough, and on reaching the track again he had to sit down and remove the annoyance before he could proceed on his interrupted journey.

One blessing now came unexpectedly to him—the rain withheld itself, and as it had been of brief duration, he was not put to any serious inconvenience by it. When he had replaced his shoes he travelled straight forward without mishap for about half an hour. The sky now began to clear somewhat, though there was yet neither moon nor stars to be seen. Neither did the light of any house appear to guide him. Suddenly, however, he came to a bit of dark thick wood, pine and spruce as he could tell by the odours; The running of a little brook caught his ear; he was at the crossing.

This cheered his spirits and he stepped forth upon a road well-trodden by the footsteps of men and horses. His very feet rejoiced in the touch of this country road; it stirred latent feelings, he could have hugged the ground, had he the arms to go around it, he could have done what D'Arcy Conyers was one of the last men to do—he could have wept.

But which way to go from here? That was now the question, and yet in his excitement it had not occurred to him sooner.

“Well, let us think about it,” said he audibly, “D'Arcy, you must find a way out.” For a little he tramped about to get a dry spot and having

found one to his liking he sat down in the darkness to wait for some omen to guide his decision.

It was many years since he had said a prayer, nor did he utter one now, for there was more of a man in D'Arcy than some would imagine. If he, D'Arcy Conyers, could ignore God in the days of his prosperity, he would not trouble him in the days of adversity. So he let the prayer go unsaid; but do no blessings come to us but those we ask for? Is no light upon our path given us except when we request it? Does no voice whisper in the ear save when that ear is turned to listen?

By scouting about in the darkness D'Arcy found that the brook which was making merry in its course, crossed the country road a little way off under a bridge, and to this he went forward and sat down on the ends of the projecting logs and lighted another cigarette. He would rest a bit and would think; he would listen. It was not raining, and a little wind was getting up. The pine trees were making the sweetest music and the brook was rippling over stones under the bridge; if need be, he could stay there all night, enjoy his feelings if not his memories, and go on his way in the morning regardless of the consequences.

There was something better, however, about to happen. A dog barked at no great distance off. D'Arcy ejaculated, "Heavens! This is the way!" And so saying he sprang to his feet and put off with great strides, his cigarette glowing in the night from the quickness of his pace and the little breeze which was moving the darkness and rustling the spruce tops along the way.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE MOON AMONG THE CLOUDS

D'ARCY had not proceeded far upon his darksome journey when greater certainty came to stimulate his rising hopes, for the dog barked again, this time in fuller tones. At the same moment night began to thin out and D'Arcy knew himself to be not far from a clearing. Suddenly from over the tops of the cedar bushes on his left, there came the startling clitter clatter of a cow bell; for the resting creature, whether disturbed by the approach of D'Arcy or stirred by something akin to a dream, threw her head from one side to the other in somewhat of fright. D'Arcy was now in high spirits, for of all the friendly sounds of a country side, none is more purely so, than the dink-a-donk of a cow bell, unless it be, perhaps, the crowing of a cock in the farmyard.

Presently he saw a light in motion, evidently that of a lantern in the hand of someone walking abroad. Soon another light appeared, a mere spot of pale red, shining steadily in the blackness, "Quite likely," said D'Arcy, "a lamp in the kitchen of some farm house." He pressed on, therefore, with great strides and sooner than expected came to a gate through which, cautiously, but without the loss of a moment he turned, and

presently was knocking at the door of a house of considerable size and of fine appearance. While waiting for response from within, his eyes wandered to a group of tall pines and beech trees which stood very near him, dark and silent; above them, in the open spaces of the sky the new moon was letting out her radiance as she fled among the clouds. Next moment he was startled out of his wits by a dog (evidently the one whose bark he had first heard) leaping and growling about him in a most unfriendly manner. On the very instant, however, when the animal seemed likely to rend him, the door opened and the great manly form of the owner of the place, Mr. Alexander Carson, stood before him, silhouetted against the light of the house lamp. At first sight of his master the dog gave up the attack and vanished into the surrounding darkness.

Mr. Carson did not say, "Good-night" to the unexpected visitor: he only said, "Come in, come in," meantime stepping aside and pulling the door wide open. When D'Arcy crossed the threshold he saw that his friendly host was a man of middle age, with grey side-whiskers, white hair, and graciousness of manner.

"Have a chair, my boy! Here, take this one, it's more comfortable."

"Thank you sir," said D'Arcy.

"You are out late, young man, and you must be wet."

"Not very wet, sir," replied the disconcerted D'Arcy, "but my feet are muddy I am afraid, sir,

for I have been tramping a good distance and it was very dark before the moon came out."

"I say, that dog put terror into me," said D'Arcy.

"He's a brute," replied Mr. Carson, "I'll have to get rid of him."

Mr. Carson now seated himself opposite D'Arcy and with an eager and kindly countenance, which not for a moment turned from his young visitor, seemed to ask but one thing: "What can I do for you?" And yet a delicacy of feeling and a fear of intrusion kept this great man from actually putting the kindly question.

D'Arcy had come to seek a lodging, and, if fortune favoured him, a supper, but in the presence of this man his speech began to desert him—a thing he had never known before. At the moment he was saved from embarrassment by the appearing of a portly woman with black eyes and hair, and of a motherly, if somewhat effusive manner, whom he rose to greet.

"Mrs. Carson, my wife, Mr.———but I did not get your name young man," said Mr. Carson.

"Edward Casky," said D'Arcy promptly, extending his hand to the good woman.

"Almost the same as my own," remarked Mr. Carson with a kind laugh.

"You will stay for supper, Mr. Casky?" inquired Mrs. Carson very kindly.

"Well, thank you, Mam, if it is not too much trouble," replied Edward, as we must now call him.

"Certainly you will," broke in Mr. Carson, "you will have it with me."

"He has just come in, and I have the table spread and ready for him," ejaculated his good-natured wife.

"It only means another plate," continued Mr. Carson, rising to go to the kitchen where supper was awaiting him.

"We have always a bite to eat in this house," joined in the kindly woman. Whereupon this friendly pair led the way to the kitchen accompanied by the strange young visitor.

It has been remarked that D'Arcy found it difficult to put the very question he had carried on the tip of his tongue through all his evening's experience. And such was his predicament still, not altogether because the good people with whom he found himself, talked so freely as to leave him but little opportunity of saying anything, but for another reason more pertinent to our study; he found himself by the mere knocking at the door of this unknown house transported to the very presence chamber of his own boyhood life again.

Ah, these old, country homes, God bless them! Men and women have not created anything quite so like heaven and God has improved but little upon them in the matter of heaven itself. There is no word in our language to express adequately this something which Edward found there: "surroundings," is too hard, and "environment" lacks the very inwardness of meaning which is of the essence of what is meant.

Indeed Edward was speechless, for the foun-

tains of his soul were broken up by the flood of memories which now inundated as it were his very soul, and being tired and somewhat wearied by the experiences of the day, his only refuge from saying too much lay in saying nothing at all, or as nearly so as possible.

It was in that country kitchen that Edward's mood was broken and he found smiles and words again, for it was there, as we have said, that the table was spread with the most wholesome food, and there too he saw for the first time the radiant countenance and heard the bubbling laughter of the eldest daughter of the house, Miss Phyllis Carson. She had the bluest eyes, the rosiest cheeks and the jolliest face imaginable; laughter to her was as natural as rippling to a brook or singing to a bird. Her soul was too open, frank, full of sunlight and of friendliness to live imprisoned behind a gloomy countenance, and before supper was over Edward had words again; indeed he had to speak and laugh in the midst of his new acquaintances, but his speaking was not honest and frank which is the only speech which ever did become a man, or ever will. Lies and fraud had made him what he was and in lies must he find refuge even in the presence of these honest and kindly people.

"You are a stranger in these parts?" said Mr. Carson as they seated themselves at the table, being anxious to know something of his guest.

"I am sir," replied Edward. "I am a student on my way back to college; have been selling books and periodicals all through the holidays and got

together a few nickels for expenses, but I have not met with much success."

Fear now rising within him lest he should be asked to speak more in detail of his books or even to exhibit them he tactfully turned the subject of conversation to matters of local concern; "Was it a good farming country about here? And how many years had Mr. Carson been in the place—was he a pioneer? And in those old days it was no doubt a lumber country? And how heavy must have been the work of clearing away the forests,—logging, and pulling the stumps! Yes; and the buildings, what labour it was to erect them out of logs—and the fences too!

Having successfully diverted thought from himself and started Mr. Carson telling of old times which he was very fond of doing; and to which D'Arcy was equally fond of listening, the evening passed without further intrusion into matters too personal to be dwelt upon with pleasure.

Mr. Carson and his young visitor talked and smoked long after the female members of the household had retired. At length the good-natured Mr. Carson perceiving that his guest was showing signs of weariness, put away his pipe, rose up, took a small lamp which had been made ready and left on a side table by good Mrs. Carson, and led the way up stairs, and so conducted the young man, tired and bruised from his walk and his going on all-fours over the bridge, to a room which was not large but displayed every mark of comfort and cleanliness.

Handing Edward the lamp at the bedroom door, Mr. Carson said with great manly kindness, "Good night, Mr. Casky, I hope you will rest well; don't be in a hurry in the morning."

Edward was like one half paralyzed, so turbulent were his emotions and yet so tense his control of them. He only said, "Good-night", laid aside the lamp—staggered back into a chair and sat there dazed and silent.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MORNING ON LAKE SIMCOE

NOT many pleasant miles away from the lonely spot whereon the feet of D'Arcy fell the night he slipped from the train into the darkness and the rain and the swamp; not far from where we have just now left him sleeping cosily between white sheets and downy feathers, awaiting the dawn to fly over the hills with fresh hope, lies the quiet little town of Barrie, strewn along the beautiful shore of Lake Simcoe.

Every traveller whose good fortune has guided his footsteps thither recalls it as, "Barrie, the Beautiful;" See it, and you will at once perceive the fitness of the epithet; traverse the country round about and you will understand why Barrie, the county town of Simcoe, is where it is, and no where else in all that fair land; look out over the stretches of its lake and you will have no further questionings as to why the Huron Indians applied to it the sweet-sounding name of "Ouentaroin"—the beautiful lake; nor will you demand any further evidence of the Huron's delight in nature's charms; neither will you wonder why Governor Simcoe coveted so large and fair a piece of God's creation for a memorial to his late father Captain Simcoe of the Royal Navy.

Now it so happened that on a certain clear and windless morning near the end of September, two gentlemen were seen to draw their yellow skiff ashore opposite the post office and the railway depot of this quiet town. They fastened their little craft securely, climbed up the steamboat dock, walked along it to southward chatting the while, and at its farther end seated themselves side by side, letting their feet hang over the dock's edge, that in this comfortable position they might the more fully enjoy the engaging prospect and each other's cherished companionship. The mirror-like waters stretched out before them for a goodly distance, then came a ruffled part where some wandering puffs of wind were playing on the surface, and, far away, within the dimness of the opposite shore, a canoe with a solitary occupant was passing on some unknown errand of pleasure or of petty duty.

"I have been ten years here now, Canon," said one of these gentlemen.

"Indeed," said the other, "and I but two so far;" and turning to his companion with a smile he added, "I hope my sojourn may be as long and as successful as yours."

"Yes," said the schoolmaster—a short man with high brow, Roman nose, blue eyes, clear-cut mouth, and slight, fair moustache—"long enough and on the whole successful, but not always pleasant; for in many ways, sir, school boards are like vestrys."

"Oh, indeed! and wherein lies the resemblance?" asked the Canon.

To which the schoolmaster made reply, "Not always as intelligent or as agreeable as they might be." There was severity in the schoolmaster's tone, for the iron of ignorance and prejudice had entered deep into his fine soul.

Canon Battershall on the contrary, laughed a sweet soft laugh like notes of music, and replied, (putting his hand on the schoolmaster's shoulder) "My dear Bonnycastle, you are right, some vestrymen have a touch of the world, the flesh and the devil clinging to them; I am sorry to hear that it is so with schoolboards. A little taint of the old Adam, I suppose," he added jocularly.

"I regret, sir," replied the schoolmaster, "that it is more than a taint; how much more I shall not say."

There was no smile on Mr. Bonnycastle's countenance nor was there kindness in his tone of voice as he spoke, which Canon Battershall was quick to perceive. He himself had known of church officers of whom it might be said, "They practise as much of the Spirit of Christ as the savage," but he had grown patient and mellow while enduring them.

"My dear Bonnycastle, we shall continue to be friends, we shall often meet, for our homes are not far apart, and our wives will grow in each other's esteem. I rejoice already in your familiarity with the great authors. It may be that I can help you in some of your religious difficulties. We shall feast together, and our wives (God bless them) will share with us in our festivities. You have your gardening to interest you, and I shall have

some more of your lettuce," he added laughingly. "We shall cultivate the best spirits in our respective governing bodies and pray for grace to bear with the stupidities of the others. And nature—I could live for this alone" continued the Canon, lifting one of his hands and moving it from left to right across the scene before him; "this queen of Canadian lakes," he went on—"how lucid its waters and how placid in spite of winds; and those tall pines yonder, whose tops rise above the summit of the forest as though in triumph over the slayers of their fellows; so we too must rise above ordinary levels, for our callings and our work lay it on us as a necessity and as a duty, my dear Bonnycastle."

There was no verbal response on the part of the schoolmaster but his face brightened, he turned his head, looked at his companion, witnessed the beautiful earnestness of his countenance, and rose to leave the place. He had proceeded but a few steps, however, when he turned back, extended his hand to the clergyman and said: "Thank you, Canon, we must meet often. What a delightful morning we have had! Now let us get to the Post Office before the train comes in."

As they walked slowly northward along the extending dock, the town rose before them on its series of ascending hills, and the tall spires of its three churches, each on its own eminence, glittered in the sun. The shore line curved away on their left, a veritable crescent of white sand between the steely water of the lake and the low-lying shore yellowing and reddening to autumn.

“An historic spot, this,” remarked Mr. Bonnycastle wishing both to break silence and to bring in another subject of conversation.

“Indeed,” said the Canon.

“O yes, a landing place since times long ago. The Indians crossing to Georgian Bay drew up their birch canoes yonder where the sand bar is. A picture, if you will sir:—the little fire, the little copper-faced, black-haired children—the squaw, and the Indian with his pipe, the rough meal, then off again over a long portage through the forest, the Indian with his canoe on his head, the squaw burdened like a pack horse and the little ones following and playing along the trail. Then they went on to Willow Creek where they floated down to the winding Nottawasaga River and so on to the Georgian Bay.”

“How very interesting!” remarked the Canon.

While this little speech was being delivered, the two had come to a halt and now moved on again towards the Post Office, for the mail train was rolling round the curving end of the lake. As they walked, Mr. Bonnycastle continued to make references of interest on local history.

“Where the Post Office stands, was the site of the first building in the place; stores, erected by Sir George Head for the British Government during the War of 1812.”

“Indeed, I had no idea of these parts being affected by that war.”

“O yes, this old Indian trail I have just referred to was at that time opened up for waggons and became the transport road for all the supplies

destined for the Upper Lake Forts——avoiding the enemy's border.”

“You interest me greatly,” said Canon Battershall.

“And strange to relate,” continued Mr. Bonnycastle, having successfully directed conversation to his special field of interest, “Sir John Franklin passed this way on his final and fatal expedition to the North.”

“And some of the ill-fated settlers of Lord Selkirk's expedition came down this road to found one of the townships to the southwest; and they inhabited well-nigh a whole township.”

“Indeed, indeed,” remarked the Canon who knew but little of the great west and the romance and heroism of its early days.

The mail train from Toronto was now curving and puffing round the crescent of the Bay and sending long clouds of smoke out over the waters. Only a moment more and it would roll thundering into the depot and cut off their direct route to the town and the Post Office. So hastening their steps, the two companions (of the early morning about the shores of the misty lake) crossed the track, and were soon mingling with the crowds on the station platform. Going up the walk towards the Post Office, they encountered, by a little garden, Mr. Alexander Carson who had come into Barrie at an early hour on a matter of business.

“Good morning, Mr. Carson,” said the school-master in the most friendly of tones.

“Good morning, Mr. Bonnycastle,” replied Mr. Carson in his deep soft voice. “—and Canon Bat-

tershall," he added, smiling graciously and extending his great hand. "I am delighted to meet you this morning Canon, I was just going to call on you, to ask you, sir, if you could...."

"Half a moment," interjected Mr. Bonmycastle, "allow me a word, for I must leave you." His companions standing before him came at once to silence and kindly attention, and the schoolmaster, smiling with great pleasantness lifted high his right hand and placing it upon the great shoulder of Mr. Carson spoke to the clergyman:

"Canon, here is a Man and a Churchman! I could not leave you in better company. So good morning to both of you." And touching his cap, he hurried off, entered the Post Office, and saw his clerical friend and Mr. Alex. Carson no more that day.

Both men gazed after him for a moment with smiles, not knowing quite what to say. It was the clergyman who broke the silence.

"A fine fellow, this schoolmaster! I have been out with him all morning on the shore of the lake."

Mr. Battershall lifted up his great blue eyes and surveyed the countenance of his giant-like companion for answer.

"One of the finest I have known," replied Mr. Carson, in a deeper, softer voice than was usual even with him, being stirred by Mr. Bonmycastle's kindly reference to himself. "I have known him many years," continued Mr. Carson, "my daughters passed through his school, and both my wife and I are grateful for what he has done for them."

Anxious to divert thought from the incident

which had just occurred, Mr. Carson now resumed the line of conversation which the schoolmaster had interrupted. "I was intending to call on you this morning, Canon."

"Oh, indeed!" remarked the clergyman.

"Yes," continued Mr. Carson, "just to pay my respects to you and to ask you in good time to conduct our Harvest Services at St. Bride's and to take dinner with us afterwards."

"I should be delighted," replied the Canon, "but my own work keeps me here for the morning, you know."

"Quite so, quite so, I might have thought of that, but you see the afternoon would do us just as well, in which case you could at least come to tea with us. We like to have the clergy, you know and we try to make them at home with us."

"And so you do, Mr. Carson," quickly and eagerly, replied the Canon. "It is a joy for me to go to your place and I need not say how much Eugenie loves your daughters."

The invitation was so genuine that Canon Battershall gave his consent and the matter was settled. Following this interview, for a little time the two gentlemen conversed on those small matters of life which serve nevertheless the important function of introducing us more fully to those we admire. Then wishing each other a hearty good morning, they parted at the Post Office door and the Canon after getting his mail walked quickly and joyously along the street and up the hill to where the Church stood in a grove of maple trees touched with the glory of parting summer.

The pitch of the hill and the quickness of his pace, left him puffing when he reached the top and deepened the healthy red of his countenance. Mounting the grey stone steps before the door, under the tall red brick spire, he turned about, removed his hat and stood looking down over the tops of the crowded buildings and off to the expansive lake glittering in the golden light of the morning and beyond it, as ever, the forest, and the tops of the enduring pines.

It was the countenance of this man which attracted and fascinated the eye of any who saw him. One would not say he was handsome, nor was it his features considered severally which gave his face its charm; neither was it the effect of their happy combination. The attraction there had not its origin in physical things; it was, as one might say, a light which finding its way through them, imparted somewhat of its own glory as it passed. Nevertheless it must be remarked that the features were well suited to the expression of the soul, for the eyes were large and blue and open; the brow was high, curved, and well exposed because of slight baldness; the beard was streaked with tiny silver threads and curled in low waves which never quite disappeared under the barber's shears, and the hair, black and wavy, was worn full at the back above his collar.

His expression altered, as he continued standing on the steps before the church; the breathing slowed down to normal, the flush disappeared from the face, and the soul crept silently back laden with the joy of sane thought, of sweet emo-

tion born of fellowship with men, of sympathy with quiet nature, and of a deep understanding of the harmony and power of the Christian mystery.

Suddenly he turned toward the door, entered the Church and knelt down in the rear pew. His eyes were well open and his interlocked hands were resting on the back of the seat in front of him. Repose and rapture were on his countenance and thankfulness for his two strong companions mingled in his fancy and his prayers.

The silence of the place was very wonderful and the spirit world seemed pressing him on every side. Soon he rose from his knees and took to walking to and fro along the carpeted aisle from the font to the chancel steps, lost in meditation. It was his way: "For thus," said he, "we penetrate the externals of religion, thus the individual proves and enjoys the reality and the mystery which lie just beyond, if indeed beyond the physical world."

And so he walked, so spoke aloud and turned and walked again, the world of reality unifying in his soul with the world of spirit. He felt his mind to be a mirror reflecting the lights, shadows, colours, curves, translucent mists and the wooded shores of the morning by the lake. He recalled it all: it was good, beautiful, not irreligious, not apart from God, but within the compass of godly thought and feeling; all of it was God's beautiful world. "Oh, how wonderful!" he exclaimed— "What a pity men do not see it!"

And as he walked, and prayed, and spoke aloud, and even sang a rapturous song, there took shape

before him the mystic figure of the Christ, wondrously beautiful. He spoke no words but these, and to utter these, he did not kneel or fall prostrate, as well he might, as often indeed he had; he stood and with deepest reverence in his being and manly beauty on his face, he exclaimed with joy, and yet with quiet, "O yes, yes' Blessed Galilean, I have long thought so. now I know—earth and heaven meet in Thee—and both are beautiful.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE DAWN OF NEW HOPE

WHEN Edward awoke next morning he was loath to get out of bed, though the sun falling upon the window panes was quickly robbing the little room of its nightly cool and freshness. He felt safe there from his pursuers, if anywhere in the world, and it was a homely, cozy room, so like those in the country homes of his boyhood, in one of which he chose to fancy himself, as when a youth he had gone to his Uncle's to spend the night.

Moreover, this question came into his mind: Having risen and received his breakfast at the hands of these kind people what would he next do? How would he dispose of himself? He had no funds for travelling, where would he go if he had? This lonely place, if he could but continue to stay here for a while, would certainly afford him a safe retreat and would recall happy memories of days at his riverside home on the Gatineau, where because of his innocence he was safe anywhere and everywhere.

Having resolved on this course, he rose as one does who has a clear call to duty, though in reality duty was a matter of little concern to him. It was now as ever with Edward, a question of self,

and the last shift in the saving of his own precious neck. In fact, Edward was coming to the end of a course which he had long been following with quick and certain strides—a way which led up and up to the mount whereon stood the temple of the god of Self, and not until he had gone the full length of the journey did he behold the monster whom he worshipped; indeed not until he was in the grip of that monster did he realize that, in the end, the pursuit of self brings to the pursuer that same pain and distress which all the while it brought to those who were unfortunate enough to be related to him by ties of blood and affection.

Edward was careful with his toilet this morning; not that he was ever neglectful of it, quite the contrary as we have seen, it was only that he had greater need than formerly because of the condition of his clothes, and much would depend as he well knew, on first impressions.

Edward went forth from his room without going down on his knees that morning, though he had prayed the night before and earnestly too; but now that morning had come and self had one idea to work out, one atom of conceit left, he would not lift up his eyes to the great Guide of weary, straying men.

As he stole quietly down the stair, an old-fashioned one, it creaked at every step. In the dining room through which he passed, he saw a neat breakfast table set for one—it was surely for himself. On the verandah he saw two chairs, into one of which he had bumped the night before when the dog came tearing at his legs. Beyond the

platform was an orchard where apple trees were dangling their delicious red fruit; and a little to the left were some pine trees, their needles glistening in the morning sunshine as though dipped in silver.

He turned to the right and went along the platform, then down four steps and through a little gate into the farmyard. Coming towards him he saw the two daughters of the house bending under the weight of milk pails. He ran towards them and was by their side in an instant, exclaiming, "Good morning, good morning, but let me help." Observing that Jennie carried a crutch he gave his attention to her, and said, "Let me take your load; just my job—used to do it at home." Little Jennie smiled her sweet gratitude and gave up her pail, and Phyllis rippling with laughter, made fun of him about spotting his clothes.

Mr. Carson had gone to Barrie in the cool of the morning while Edward lay in bed, and the other members of the household were about their many duties. Edward was not slow to see that to win the daughters' kindly opinion was not only important in itself but was also to be desired because their favour was certain to go a long way towards making good his case with Mr. Carson himself.

"Thank you very much," said the lame girl, receiving the pail again from his hands at the milk house door.

"You must have your breakfast now," urged Phyllis, laughingly, pleased that he had relieved the weaker sister of her burden.

"Not a bit of it." Edward replied, "not till I have helped you finish up this milking business."

"But you'll be hungry; come in, wont you, it's on the table," insisted the happy-faced Phyllis.

"No indeed, thank you, I'm used to this."

"You'll get yourself all spattered," she urged. But Edward really wished to help and so was finally permitted to do so.

"Let me turn this separator for you. Wait till I get off my coat. By jiminey, it's hard to start! By heck! Do you allow fellows to swear here?"

Phyllis was a muscular girl who had also acquired a great dexterity in doing her work. She laughed heartily at Edward's efforts. However he got the thing under way at last and as soon as the cream began to flow out and he had recovered his breath, he exclaimed, "Better this than the old tin pans; used to set 'em in the cellar for Mother; got sour milk and cream most of the time; gave sour milk to the "couchon" and made butter of the cream.

"And you do this every day?" he enquired of Phyllis, as he ended the turning at her request, for she saw he was out of breath.

"I do, and what of it?"

"Well, you needn't while you have me here."

"That wont be long," she replied with a dazzling smile.

"Wont be long? Well, I'm going to apply to the boss for a job as soon as he comes home."

"A job, eh! Haven't you job enough selling books? Phyllis enquired brightly.

"Sure I have, but I'm going to quit it if the boss will let me farm," he replied pointedly.

"A pretty farmer you'd make! The cows would step on you if you tried milking them!"

"What do you take me for? By Jiminey, you're hard on a poor book agent!"

In the midst of such pleasantries the sound of buggy wheels was heard, and looking up, they saw Mr. Carson coming down the sand hill in a cloud of dust. Edward seeing his approach was quick to commend himself by hastening to the gate and opening it; an act which Mr. Carson appreciated and for which he expressed his gratitude.

"You are out early, sir," said Edward, "have you been far?"

"No, only a little run into town before the day's work."

"And how far is it to town, sir?" enquired Edward, as he proceeded to assist in releasing the horse from the carriage shafts.

"Eight miles as the crow flies but ten if you count the ups and downs of the road and all its turns."

"What, twenty miles, made by this hour of the day!" exclaimed Edward.

"Yes, about that."

"You must have a good driver here," Edward went on, "certainly you have a pretty beast."

"Pretty enough, but I don't keep her for her beauty; she gets me over the road a bit faster than most of them, so she is the one for me. I never like to take another man's dust," spoke Mr. Carson in pride of his roadster.

"Have you had breakfast yet, young man?" Mr. Carson asked, as he took Favorite by the bridle and turned her about most cleverly so that Edward, standing by the shafts, might admire her beauty and build.

"Well, no sir, not yet. No fault of your daughters, however. They urged me an hour ago, but I took a hand in milking and putting the cows away.

"You have been very kind, Mr. Casky," said Mr. Carson, still holding his driver by the bridle and addressing Edward who stood before him eager for a chance to state his case.

"The fact is I want a job if you will give me one, Mr. Carson," he broke in. "I like it here and the book business is bringing me nothing worth while."

"A job? What of the college?"

"I'll get some books and work at night."

"A job!" said Mr. Carson again, smiling broadly. Then in his deep voice he enquired: "And pray what could you do on a farm? I want a lad true enough, or a man. You are neither one nor the other 'saving your presence'—rather soft for my work."

In the midst of this exchange of words Mr. Carson with his horse set off across the yard to the stable, Edward walking by his side urging his case.

Edward was encouraged by the words, "I need a lad right enough," and the outside world being no place for him just now, he threw all the force he could muster into the plea for the place.

"I'll tell you sir—take me on trial—that's all;

no pay till you see what I'm worth, only my keep. And sir, I can milk and dig potatoes and weed the garden. It is a good while since I did these things, —but please give me a trial."

"I'll need a chap for potato digging shortly" said Mr. Carson. "Well, well, we'll see what the women say; let's have breakfast anyhow. I am hungry and we'll see what the girls say."

Edward had already made good with the daughters of the house, as we may imagine, and good motherly Mrs. Carson was not hard to bring to a favourable state of mind.

At breakfast the subject was cause for jocular discussion, especially on the part of jolly Phyllis, of whose humour Edward was more afraid than of any force likely to be used against him. Little Jennie was quite for having Mr. Casky, for no one had given her such willing help in days gone by, and she spoke her mind. "I vote for Edward Casky" she exclaimed. This brought forth the rejoinder from Edward, "Good for you Miss Jennie. I guess I'll get the job!"

So after the meal was over, Edward threw off his collar and rolled up his sleeves and was sent out to dig potatoes in the vegetable garden, the happiest moment he had known for many a long day. He whistled, he sang, he blistered his hands at his work; he made light of it when evening came and at dinner jumped from the table, took the bucket from Phyllis' hand and went to the well to get fresh drinking water. What indeed did he not do to ingratiate himself with the delightful Carson family?

CHAPTER XXVI.

ST. BRIDE'S

AT a distance of two miles or more from the Carson home there stood a little wooden church, an unpretentious building, framed and boarded by the hands of the people themselves. There was a turret surmounting the entrance way, in which a bell hung, of small size but of rich silvery tones; it rang out a call to worship every Lord's Day, it tolled most dolefully at funerals and it pealed with joy at weddings.

The spot on which the church stood was central to a little circle of homesteads; yet the place was a quiet one. Indeed there was a hint of old-fashioned calm about it, for though it was hard by the little village of Midhurst, with its school, its blacksmith shop, its little stores, and a few dwelling houses in which the operators of these small industries lived, it was separated from them by a ridge of low hills and a group of thriving pine trees. This modest rural sanctuary was situated so that it looked with never varying constancy across a broad deep valley down which a goodly stream gurgled in a tortuous way among many trees and low bushes.

Just below the church this brook expanded into a lakelet, a mill-pond of former years, and there-

after it leaped in triumph over the relic of an ancient dam and then ran away twining and twisting and murmuring with delight among thick woods.

Edward had been induced, after much persuasion, to go to church on the afternoon of Harvest Thanksgiving Day, though, heretofore, he had quite refused to move from his happy haven.

Said Mr. Carson, "Canon Battershall is coming and everybody will be there to hear him. It would be the talk of the whole countryside if you were to stay away."

"Well sir, I haven't much use for parsons, but we'll see," was Edward's reply.

The name Battershall impressed him at once as that of his old Gatineau clergyman. "Could it be possible?" enquired he of himself, "I dare not ask anything about the man, not even regarding his appearance. I recall that Battershall left Aylwin, and went, I know not where."

His curiosity finally overcame his scruples, and, professing interest in the Harvest Services, he consented to attend; in reality he wished to see for himself who this Canon Battershall might be.

And so having accompanied the family he was now standing among the other young country men about the churchyard chatting of small affairs, and waiting for the arrival of the clergyman. No eyes were half so watchful as his for the sign of Canon Battershall's coming.

Soon there came a quiver to his heart when he beheld what must be the expected carriage moving towards them along a strip of sandy road beyond

the valley. His expectations were confirmed when a moment later the bell began ringing in the tower. It was indeed the Canon, but could it be the Battershall of his boyhood days?

When the approaching carriage reached the pond and the waterfall it could be more clearly seen, hence for the first time it was observed that the Canon was not unaccompanied. "Heavens!" exclaimed Edward to himself, who, as well as the others, perceived the fact just mentioned, "Can it be Eugenie who is with him?"

Edward now moved a little way from the others lest they should read his thoughts. Nevertheless he kept his eyes straining towards the mouth of the glen for the first glimpse of the minister. "Was it the face of his old clergyman he was about to look upon? It could scarcely be, and yet the name Battershall is not a common one. If it should so turn out, will he recognize me? I must take this possibility into account, but it is not likely he will. It is six years since he saw me and I have changed—grown to manhood since, and. . ." He paused for a moment in his silent forming of sentences, for his intervening years flashed across his mind. Then he proceeded, "I should know him anywhere—the eyes, the voice, the smile; could it be that it is Eugenie with him?"

Such were the questionings in the soul of Edward Casky as he moved restlessly about among his new companions, yet keeping careful watch for the first sign of the horse which at any moment might emerge from the glen.

Ah, how secret are the counsels of the heart!

In all that countryside no one knew, not even his friend Mr. Carson, what anxious thoughts came up unbidden in the guilty soul of Edward at that moment.

On a sudden the slow-moving carriage appeared in a film of dust. "For God's sake!" murmured Edward to himself, "*it is Canon Battershall—and Eugenie!*"

"I shall take the horse by the bridle, Mr. Carson," said Edward, stepping forward, making certain by this ruse of escaping the eye of Canon Battershall and of Eugenie for the moment. The move was successful, for no sooner had that gentleman and his daughter alighted from the buggy than they were received by Mr. Carson; others soon crowded about to claim attention and to shake hands with the visiting clergyman and his charming daughter.

Edward quickly made off with the carriage to the place for tying the horses below the church, as much flushed and excited as one of his temperament and training could very well be. He did not hurry to return, but soon the bell began ringing again which signified that everything was now in readiness for the Service, and like the other young men he must needs enter the church.

As he went towards the door, Edward's soul became a fountain of many emotions, few of which gave him any pleasure, yet he let them freely rise for he had confidence that he could not be overmastered by any force within himself. In this he estimated poorly, for when he got inside the church and the service began it

was as much as he could do to restrain an outburst. The language of the Prayer Book was so familiar, though it had not fallen upon his ears for many a day, and the voice of the clergyman had not altered a whit from what it was when first his youthful ears had caught its pleasant tones among the hills of the Gatineau. Fortunately he had ushered himself into the last pew and was seated in a corner of the church. And when the Harvest Hymn began to roll from dozens of rustic voices it taxed him to the limit of his endurance to hold back the tears and keep his chin from quivering.

Yet he had strong motives impelling him to self-restraint. The game was up for one thing should he give way, and for another, by staying where he was he could feast his eyes on the jet black hair, the pretty ears, and even a portion of the flushed cheek of beautiful Eugenie, sitting by little Jennie in the Carson pew. For this joy alone there must be complete self-repression if for no other; and it was so.

When the Service was at an end and he was able to gain the open air and the opportunity of converse with his fellows, the affair seemed to him no mean victory. At the same time he was aware of having learned that emotions are not to be tampered with unduly. Moreover, he felt himself better prepared to meet Canon Battershall at the Carson's and to look upon his winsome daughter across the tea table.

He was not a little disconcerted, however, and, strange to say, cursed his luck, when, the carriage being ready, he saw that Mr. Carson was getting

into the clergyman's buggy to drive with that gentleman, thus leaving Eugenie in the company of the Miss Carsons and himself.

Edward came forward driving Mr. Carson's very fine horses and covered carriage and drew up in front of the church door to admit the ladies. They were expecting his arrival and were ready and standing on the platform before the church door under the little tower. On reaching the spot, Edward got down from his seat, removed his cap and stood facing the ladies, the reins in his left hand and his back toward the handsome bay horses. He was not a little excited at being obliged thus to expose himself to recognition, nevertheless, to face the situation with as much composure as he could muster up, appeared to him his only refuge. Try as he would, however, his great brown eyes brightened, his cheeks flushed, his high broad forehead grew very pale under his black hair, which had already grown quite long again; his tight lips lost their sternness, and seemed to alternate between twitching and smiling. Edward had not yet been above six weeks in the country and consequently was not half as much of a rustic as he should like to have been for his present purpose. His tie and collar were as neat as could be and his suit fitted him well, for all it was of poor quality and much worn; and now as always there was with Edward a certain softness and refinement of manner which often commended him to his betters.

All this did not escape the great blue eyes of tall and beautiful Eugenie and caused her to wish that

Phyllis in her excitement had not taken it for granted that Edward and she had met at the time of her arrival before the Service began.

Edward extended his hand to little Jennie and helped her into the front seat thus making certain that Miss Battershall must take the second one with Phyllis. This they quickly did, for the horses were impatient and the carriage was driven off at top speed.

It was not until they had proceeded a third of the homeward journey that Miss Carson be-thought herself, enquired, apologized, and introduced Edward to Miss Eugenie Battershall. It was the first time he had heard the mention of her name, and it suffused his soul with pleasure like the breath of flowers or the dulcet strains of distant music.

Edward lifted his cap and said what was both true and false, "I am very glad to meet you." Nevertheless, he thanked his lucky stars that it was not necessary and quite impossible under the need of watching the horses, to confront those eyes and charms again. After the introduction he spoke not a word the entire journey home, lest something in his voice should recall memories to the mind of Eugenie. Moreover, it was sufficient enjoyment to listen to her voice; and to reflect on all that had since fallen to his unhappy lot brought to his soul no end of pain.

In the multitude of his thoughts he could scarcely find heart to form a resolution, which, nevertheless in the end he was driven to make—he would not sit at tea with the family, on the contrary he

would go far away beyond the swamp to carry salt to the herd of young cattle grazing there; thus would he escape the visitors, and gain loneliness for the desperate conflict which began afresh to rage in his soul.

No intimation of his resolve was given to anyone save Jennie, and she was bound over to silence. Within five minutes therefore after their arrival at the Homestead he went to her and said, "I have no use for parsons; I'd as leave plough half a day as talk to one of them, so here goes, Jennie, I'm off to the stock!" And putting one finger on her lips, he said kindly, "And not a word out of you. Remember, I trust you Jennie." She gave her word and smile which might be trusted and then hobbled off on her crutch to take her part in getting ready the evening meal, not a little sorry that Edward, who had already won a great place in her heart, was not to join the party.

After carefully putting away the horses, Edward went striding across the yard with his pipe in his mouth, smoking furiously, sprang over the bars, passed down the lane by the flowing spring and disappeared into the heavy spruce woods of the swamp: and the Battershalls were nowhere to be seen when he returned late in the evening.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CHRISTMAS EVE AND A SCRAP OF VERSE

THE kitchen lamp burned brightly under a green shade, and its radiance fell on the red table cloth, on the pages of the book, and on Edward's left hand which held it open while he read and smoked and continued reading and smoking with immense satisfaction. In a very short space of time the supply of tobacco in his pipe turned to ashes because of his long and frequent puffings, and he was obliged to lay aside his book and replenish it. At the moment he realized himself to be alone and wrapped about in a great silence. The household sounds had gone—there was not one to be heard, save the crackling of the fire in the cook stove and the humming of the kettle; he was quite alone.

The Carson family had driven with double sleigh and merry bells over the early winter snow to the Christmas festivities in Barrie, and Edward could not be persuaded to make himself one of the party and gave it as his logic in the matter that he didn't like preachers, adding goodnaturedly, "Santa Claus will bring me nothing anyhow: and then you see I must take care of the house and have things ready for you when you come home."

His arguments were scarcely more convincing

to others than to himself, and yet they were put forth with such good humour and persistence as to be effective, and the family was obliged to go without him. So Edward found himself alone in the Carson house for the first time since a kindly spirit had guided his footsteps to its friendly door.

When it came upon him that he was indeed by himself, he felt his spirits rise within him for a little, and he puckered his lips for whistling a merry tune while cutting and grinding his tobacco. But the silence about him was so noticeable, so impressive that the whistling ceased ere it had well begun, and in a half murmur he questioned himself: "Am I really alone here?" Then for a moment he spoke not at all, nor whistled a breath; he even ceased from grinding his tobacco, and, holding his pipe tightly in his hand he fell into deep thought.

Soon he aroused himself, and, strange as it may seem, in order to bring himself to a state of sane assurance he laid down his pipe on the table, removed the shade from the lamp, and, taking it up, he went stealthily from room to room throughout the house. The same sight met his peering eye at every turn, the absence of every human being, the presence only of vacant chairs and empty beds; there was not a breathing creature anywhere save the great pet cat which lay on the sofa in the kitchen curled up in heavy slumber.

Edward set the lamp on the red-covered table again when he returned from his tour of inspection, restored its green shade, took up his pipe and set to filling it. Then another thought struck

him. He would go to the door, open it, and look out to see if there too all was loneliness.

It was a moonlight night. The pines were black, save where the moon lay on them, or a puff of fresh snow. There was not a motion of the branches, nor a murmur among the tops, and the first snow under them was adorned with a lace-work of shadows of strange pattern. The black dog came forward, head down and tail wagging, but Edward heeded not the cowering creature, which, as though feeling the rebuff, went again to lie down to sleep and yet to watch. And Edward presently turned about, entered the lonely house again, and gave himself to smoking comfortably by the fireside.

And so it came to pass, that this young man was surrounded with loneliness in a country home, on the night before Christmas, an evening teeming with memories, and try as he would his mind kept reverting to the imperishable scenes and experiences of his boyhood home among the Gati-neau Hills.

The stream of recollection, once released, soon gathered force and depth and in no time was rushing madly whither it would. Edward felt rising within him a longing to be where his thoughts were; and yet, that life seemed so far away and phantom-like he could scarcely convince himself that once it was for him a world of realities. In his room in Montreal there were many tangible things to remind him of it, but when he fled he abandoned them all; the very memory of them he

had left behind, as much as might be. Suddenly he recalled the leather case and the books.

One at least of these was from that shadowy world where youth was spent and parents lived, and the house stood overlooking the river and the hills beyond. He felt a sudden rush of desire to grasp it—to look into it and thus to make that phantom-life real to him again for a time while all were absent, and with the impulse he hurried upstairs, entered his room, undid the strap of the leather case and took out—the Bible.

The reader may be surprised that such a one as Edward should have a Bible with him, but after a moment's reflection it will not appear so strange, for the book was there not because it was a Bible but only because it was a book. It smote his conscience now, to recall that he had made such ignoble use of the Holy Book. Nor was he much pleased with himself that it had remained in his knapsack until another unworthy motive called it forth.

As it happened this Bible had been given him in Sunday School many years ago. To be exact the date was 1882. The inscription was in the handwriting of Rev. John Battershall, Eugenie's father. It had been won by him as a prize when a boy of ten. His mother had placed it in his trunk when he left home and because it had never been read it was to all appearances a new book still. There were no spots on its pages showing the impress of the thumb and the marks of use; on the contrary it was quite fresh, save that it was stained about the edges, and that the cloth was in several places separated from the board because

water had dropped on it once as it lay carelessly on his washstand.

Having removed the precious volume from its leather case, he gripped it with both hands, and, knowing that he was quite alone, gave utterance in an audible voice to these words, "An assurance of the reality of a life that is now past and gone!" Then he handled it, opened it, and read the inscription. He drew his thumb across the edge of the leaves causing them to flutter; something stiffer than paper impeded the regularity of the process; he looked, it was a faded maple leaf still wearing the tint of red and yellow; he took it out and it fell on the table. For a moment he paused, gazing upon it; the home on the hillside by the Gatineau rose before him; he could see the mountain ranges in their autumn glory and hear the flowing of the river at the rapids.

The experience stirred his tender emotions, but he did not give way to them, they were well under control because he had checked them so often.

Curiosity led him to go on thumbing. It was a sweet curiosity, not unmingled with a touch of sadness; perhaps there was something else contained within these pages.

At the moment a piece of paper like the page of a little book was disclosed. It bore the marks of age, its edges were worn in places, it was stained with several yellow marks. On the side which first presented itself there was no printing, but he turned it over and saw at once in large letters: "A Prayer", and in a line of smaller

type beneath, this direction: "To be used in Church." He read it; it was as follows:

"O Heavenly Father, give me grace to worship Thee in spirit and in truth, to pray to Thee earnestly, to praise Thee heartily, and to hearken to Thy Word with reverence and godly fear, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

The words proved to be perfectly familiar, he had learned them as a child. The little red Church of St. John in the Wilderness now rose before him, his youthful companions seemed to stand round about him as during a Service, and the old, yellowish page, dingy and torn, received a new stain, a wet one. The storm is not far away when the drops begin to fall.

Edward was now in that strange mood when feeling leads us on while reason lifts her voice in earnest protest. As often with us mortals he would proceed in spite of threat and consequence. "I am alone," thought he, "if I do give way to my feelings. I will try again; the Book may contain something else—a photograph perhaps—possibly one of mother's." So on he went, more carefully this time, turning page by page, and, coming near the end, he found, pressed between the leaves of the Book, stuck to one of them through long pressure in the same spot, a thin piece of paper on which was written a scrap of verse.

At once his mind flashed to an unquestionable conclusion: "This was mother's doing: she was fond of poetry, and many a time I have seen her stop in her work to pick up a fragment of newspaper because she saw a little poem on it, and then

read it verse by verse aloud, and tear it out, and put it between the pages of a book for safe keeping; it was she who put this here; her very fingers have touched it, surely her eyes have read it."

Her form now rose before him as he had seen her in his boyhood, and the tears came rushing into his eyes. He brushed them aside, however, restrained himself and read the first verse:

"You have only one mother, my boy,
Whose heart you can gladden with joy,
Or cause it to ache
Till ready to break,
So cherish that mother, my boy."

He could hardly finish the verse for emotion overcame him, he burst into a storm of tears, fell by the bedside on his knees and sobbed aloud in the loneliness which surrounded him. Yes, Edward fell on his knees by the bed. And when he rose up again, he resolved to fly to her, come what would, and tell her, and confess everything, and hold her in his arms, yes and if it might be, die for her. She would at least know that his soul was in the torment of remorse, that he was indeed of a broken and contrite heart.

Thus it was that Christmas Eve in the little room at the house of Edward's refuge. At the moment, however, the dog outside on the doorstep gave forth a sharp yelp of welcome and the sound of sleighbells announced the family's return.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A VISION IN THE WINTRY WOODS

IT was a winter morning; a grey winter morning in the sky, and a white winter morning on the earth. There was fresh snow on the yards about the Carson home covering all stains and tracks in soft white purity; there were inches and inches of snow on the fences, and banks of snow against the hillside, and puffs of snow on the green pine tops, and ribbons of snow stretched along the dark green branches of the spruce trees. The farm building in the midst of the yards to which Edward was going were deep thatched with soft white covering as it were of clouds thickened. There was not a breath of wind and the grey sky seemed to scatter through the morning air its own grey tones.

The hungry animals tied in their stalls watched for D'Arcy's arrival with dull impatience. This was his first duty every day, and required an hour of his time. He not only fed the horses but gave them a rough cleaning with brush and comb, and, on the particular morning in question, he put the harness on the great team, knowing that he was to haul fire-logs with them that day from the woods.

When he entered the stables he was greeted with moos and neighs of welcome. Having cast fodder

to the cows which were stamping and creaking in their stalls and fastenings, he set himself to the more pleasant task of caring for the horses, talking to himself meantime, and exclaiming to the creatures as he went from one to another:

"There is this satisfaction too," said he in audible tones, "I am doing something for some one else. That dear old man is a hero, by jingo, with his rheumatism, to struggle in the cold and wet! Get over there, Bess, you!"

"The spirit of a young man," he resumed, "doing this work with joy and not a grumble at his pains. Holy Moses, such men are great stuff! And that daughter! Was there ever the like of her? Lonely drudgery! And she'll marry John Grove and slave again! Think of it!"

Suddenly there was a creaking of the stable door and this soliloquy ended, as it were, in the middle of a sentence. Edward moved quickly toward the door to push it open, for it was impeded in its turning because of the heavy snowfall.

"Ho! Ho! Mr. Carson. Quite a snow fall!"

"Yes, Edward. I've brought you down a pail of water to wet the horses' oats. I hope I am not too late."

"You should not be out of the house for two hours yet," retorted Edward. "I'll attend to everything here and be ready for the bush after breakfast."

"Young man, you are a bully fine fellow, but Alex Carson doesn't quit the job like that; he takes his share. A bit stiff in the legs at first, but I am as good a man as ever. Yes, young man, I

am as tough as cowhide. So give me a shovel, and I'll get to work."

"I have just been saying," replied Edward, as he stepped forward with the shovel, "that it is not gold braid that makes a soldier or a hero; you're one, by gad, Mr. Carson!"

"Don't swear young man, I'll take your word, I'll take your word. Better work as a cripple than steal, Edward, the only two things to do to get a living, and to steal is not very satisfactory in the end."

Mr. Carson spoke these words, never suspecting how they would cut into the soul of his young and much-loved companion.

Edward was brought to silence for a moment, and then he said, "Yes, sir, you're right; the thief is never free. I don't care for money. I have had it and got nothing out of it. I am happy here with you and Mrs. Carson and Phyllis.

"And you cannot be more welcome," replied Mr. Carson. "Keep on and you'll make a bully man yet."

When the work was done both men stepped out of the stable into the snowy world. A change had come over it meantime, for the sun had arisen. Oh sunlight, thou spirit-stirring mystery, sent fresh from heaven every morning without fail! Thou comest in thy course never lagging, never hurrying, patient with all obstacles which oppose thy free diffusion, yet persisting till every dark corner is brightened. Black stumps and decaying logs share in thy glory and all common things lose their commonness, and ugly things appear beautiful in

thy rays; snow sparkles like a jewelled mantle; cold is tempered and the wind is softened.

So this morning Edward filled his lungs to their capacity with fresh crisp air, and sprang lightly across the yard to the house—youthful but in bondage. Mr. Carson followed, grey, lame, hobbling with a cane because of rheumatism, rough in exterior, but free; the freest man in God's creation, a maker of his fortune and of his country; a soldier after many battles fought and won; having a warm heart and an untarnished name, a man beloved and respected.

Mr. Carson slowly crossed the yard after the quick-footed Edward and as he did so thus ruminated concerning the young man: "A fine lad, indeed, but something strange about his stopping here! My, but can't he figure? And isn't he a nice fellow? He'll tell me about it someday; I wonder if the girls know anything?"

On entering the house and seeing Edward already at breakfast, he said:

"So you think you will try the woods to-day, Edward. It must be alone I am afraid," he added.

"If alone it must be, Mr. Carson, I shall go and do my best."

"Well, my boy, I am afraid I can't go to-day. This leg is as stiff as a poker, gave it a little wrench yesterday; that lifting in awkward places kills me. Oh, that I were ten years younger and had you to help me! We'd make things fly a day like this, my lad!"

Mr. Carson seemed old that morning, though

not really so, not in fact above fifty-five or six. His crippled condition and his apparent age were the results of his years of battling with the hard circumstances of a new country. The fighting of the Canadian pioneers was not all done on the frontiers with sword and blunderbuss, but in the backwoods also with axe and broad-axe. And many a stalwart man went crippled to his grave ere the pine forests gave place to wheat fields! Edward was right when he said, "Heroes, these men, and the real makers of Canada!" As for Mr. Carson he spoke only of stiffness, though, as a matter of fact, rheumatic pains paralyzed and twisted his limbs. "He is a brick to endure it if ever there was one," was often said of him. He was a sportsman always, and a stoic on his bad days. Being wearied with pain he would dose off in sleep as he sat in his big armchair, but no other sign would he give of agony—not a word of complaint; on the contrary he always made light of his troubles when referring to them at all. Of such stuff was Alexander Carson.

And so to the forest with the horses and bobsleighs, went Edward alone that morning. He loved the winter woods and now it suited his mood and his recent experience to be alone in their mysterious depths. Throughout the day he came and went upon his errands of log-hauling through the spruce woods on the white trail.

And when evening had well-nigh come and the grey darkness was falling again on the white world, Edward's horses trotted up one last time

to the loading place in front of the roll-way on which the logs were piled in rows.

D'Arcy was proud of having made six trips unaided and was in jubilant spirits. He leaped from the sleighs, therefore, threw down the reins, undid his wrapping chains, and set to rolling on the snowy logs while the grey horses dropped their good-natured heads in slumber. He was not so much of a novice in the woodsman's craft, as he would have Mr. Carson believe, for often in boyhood he had both witnessed the process of loading heavy sleds in the pine forest on the Gatineau, and on more than one occasion had shared in the undertaking himself. And so strong was he and so determined to win the praise of the household when night and supper time should come, that he lifted and rolled to position many fire-logs in the shortest time. When the loading was completed, the chains thrown about them, and the binding brought into position, Edward stood aside to admire his work, to light his pipe, and to enjoy his feelings of having done a man's task.

While thus engaged, he fell into a kind of reverie as tired men often do, and then a sight met his eyes which startled him to rigidity.

At the moment the grey evening was in the sky above, and dark was gathering down among the spruces. There was softness everywhere and nothing was in motion save a few wandering snow flakes. Then suddenly, to his utter astonishment, he saw coming toward him along the road before his horses, a filmy form as of a woman. More white it seemed than the snow on which she walked.

Something went through his being like an electric shock. Then he tried to reason saying, "My eyes—what is the matter with them?" Nevertheless try as he might to clear them the white filmy form refused to vanish. On the contrary it came closer and closer, then stopped just beyond the horses; and he beheld the features of his mother, her form too, and her long flowing auburn hair, which he remembered so well. Startled out of soul and countenance, his pipe dropped from his teeth and the tobacco scattered over the snow. He grew stiff as if suddenly petrified, then leaped forward with extended arms exclaiming with terrified yet appealing voice, "Mother!" But she was gone, speaking not a word and leaving no footprints on the fluffy snow over which she fled.

The poor boy paced up and down and wept aloud, amid the silent winter forest, for there was left to him only a tender baffling recollection of how sweet she appeared, of the darling countenance on which he would have given all the world to look again. But alas! No! It was not to be! He returned therefore from the spot on which she seemed to stand, his eyes filling and his heart pressing against his throat, and came and stood against the roll-way where he had been trying to light his pipe when he saw the vision appear: the logs of the roll-way were piled high on one side of him, the logs of the bobsleighs rose high and snowy on the other; to these he turned, laid down his head upon them and wept bitterly—no other sound broke the grey silence of the wintry woods.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE STORIED WYE

THE day was over-hot for walking with any degree of rapidity or pleasure, but the air was lucid and moved freely across the countryside. The sandy road leading out to the town of Midland was as damp and compact as a bit of sea beach, because of the recent rain; and the little company were soon strolling along it towards the valley of the storied Wye, which lay a mile or more in the distance. They were without a guide on their little pilgrimage to St. Marie, for the double reason that there was none to be had and none desired.

“Much better,” said the schoolmaster, “to make the trip alone. There is something jarring to the nerves in tramping tourists and gabbling guides. I remember——”

“It is worse even than that,” broke in the preacher, “it verges on the irreverent.”

“Edward here will be all the guide we need,” remarked the parson, grasping his young companion by the arm as they strode along more quickly, all in that happy mood which precedes the realizing of long-cherished hopes and the fulfilment of pleasant imaginings.

Edward was silent. He thought within himself:

“What a guide! How little we can see of each other’s hearts!” But he lit his cigarette and played his part with what grace he could.

On leaving the confines of the town, they went forward, now three abreast, now one behind the other, down a strip of country road where the long green sward was touched with daisies and golden buttercups; pools of water from the recent rain glistened in the sun; insects played upon their bosoms and frogs leaped happily through their tainted waters; sparrows sang from fence rails in every quarter; and there was enough of movement over the grasses and in the tree tops, to carry the mingling fragrance everywhere, though the wind had but little effect in cooling the air.

“A quarter of an hour’s journeying and we shall be there!” exclaimed Edward, as he led the way towards a narrow strip of maple wood through which the roadway ran and brought them out suddenly on the crest of a ridge overlooking the valley of the Wye. But so unattractive was the prospect even in early summer that they could not at once believe themselves to be looking down on the site of the Jesuit mission St. Marie. The whole place seemed stricken with perpetual grief over the fading of the only glory it ever had.

“Why did the Jesuits ever centre their mission here, pray?” Edward enquired.

“Certainly not because of the beauty of the place.” rejoined the schoolmaster.

“Avowedly not!” added Canon Battershall.

For the spot, however well located for the work of reaching the Indians in old days, has little to

commend it in the way of nature's charms. The Wye is a little stream that can only with a stretching of the truth be termed a river. At this point it is slow-moving and sluggish; in fact it has more the appearance of a disused canal than of one of nature's waterways. Having run a long and tortuous course from the far inlands and uplands, it seems to rest here, as though of sheer weariness, near its journey's end, and being meant to run on farther, it stagnates in penalty for not doing so. Where the old fort once stood the river issues from Mud Lake, a body of water not more attractive than its name implies, and from here onward its course is across marshlands to Georgian Bay, a mile or so in the distance, where it loses its own little life in the water of the great lake Huron.

There is nothing of the mission-building now remaining; time has seen to this, but there are mounds and little ridges to show where once they stood. The surface of the ground about has been much disturbed: a country road passes on the extreme north of the spot, by the foot of the hill; and but a few paces nearer, there is the track of a railway; while between these a patch of clover blooms on a parcel of ground which once gave maize to the Jesuit Fathers. Close about the mounds there is a bit of grainfield, reaching to the river on the west, and hemmed in on the south by the small canal, now dry, though in other days it supplied water to the ditch about the palisades surrounding the mission house, and carried to and fro on its bosom the bark canoe of priest and savage alike.

The ruins proper are nothing more than a col-

lection of mounds, grass-covered ridges with young birch and elm trees growing over and about them in considerable numbers. There is also a scattering of sombre firs which seem more in keeping with the spirit of the place.

What with the manifold efforts of man, and time, and nature, to make havoc of the ground and all that once stood upon it, it was no easy matter to picture the establishment in its glory. But whatever was wanting in the indications which lay about, the schoolmaster's knowledge amply supplied.

"Imagine," said Mr. Bonnycastle, "this tiny canal filled with water from the river, this ditch also about the palisade; and fancy the bastioned wall, with its surmounting crosses, and at times, its watchful French soldiers standing on guard; and within, see the buildings, made of long, rough boards and bark; the kitchen, the refectory, the lodgings for three score and ten persons, the places of retreat, and the little chapel (the glory of the place); rude structures all of them, but to the Indian wondrously grand, and to the weary Jesuit a haven of rest and a centre of activity. Then by the north side there, observe the little hospital, and beyond the walls on that green hill yonder, the last resting place of Frenchman and his red-skinned brother. Now give the eye a wider range and see about these shores the fields of maize, and on this stream and lake the coming and going of birch canoes with silent squaws, and feathered chiefs, and little copper-coloured children of the forest; for they came in great numbers

to see the strange white-faced men, to receive instruction, to feast on good things from the Jesuits' table, and to find relief from bodily ills. And fancy the lonely partings of the fathers as each went on his path of duty to some distant Indian village; picture the return after weeks or months for the resuscitation of body and spirit; what the sorrow, the joy, the pathos, the glory of it all: I say noble fellows, if Jesuits!"

"Interesting spot!" exclaimed Edward who was quite stirred by this outburst on the part of the schoolmaster.

"Well told, pedagogue!" answered Canon Battershall. And then with a hearty laugh, he added, "Good men, if bad theology. So it often happens."

"Yes," broke in Edward, "and I fear as often bad men and good theology."

"No personal reference, I hope, young man," said Canon Battershall, laughing again.

"Not to you, sir. I wish there were more men like you in the pulpits, and there would be more men like the schoolmaster in the pews as well."

"Good boy, very good boy! We were not fishing for compliments, were we, pedagogue?" replied the Canon.

By this time the schoolmaster, who after his descriptive effort had sat down and lighted his pipe, found speech again. "Yes, I agree with Edward about the pulpit."

"Come, come, no more of this," said Canon Battershall, "we came to talk about dead Jesuits; don't class me with a Jesuit dead or alive."

“All good men are near each other no matter what their creed,” ejaculated the schoolmaster—
“and it may be whether dead or alive.”

“Agreed,” said Canon Battershall. “One thing is true, be he Jesuit or Anglican, all he can have or get out of the Christian religion is the Living Christ.”

“But I say, pedagogue,” exclaimed the Canon laughingly, “a man with powers of speech like you should be a preacher of the gospel.”

“Ha, Ha, Ha; A fine preacher I’d make indeed!” remarked the schoolmaster.

“A very eloquent one, at all events, on such a theme as the gospel,” replied the Canon.

“But then a man may be an effective preacher without eloquence,” answered the schoolmaster, “as for example in your case Battershall.”

“Plain of speech, old man,” said the Canon jocularly.

“Plain and true, and kind, and complimentary in the highest degree, my dear friend. The emphasis is on the word ‘effective’ you see, not ‘eloquent’ ” said the schoolmaster. “Nobody would ever call you eloquent. But then while people applaud the eloquent man,” he continued, “they trust and obey the spiritual man who has sound common sense as well as sound learning.”

“Some clergymen are sermons,” exclaimed Edward, “others preach them.”

“Hear, Hear!” added the schoolmaster.

“Well, well, pray God it may be so, and

let us leave the subject," replied the clergyman.

"Aye, and the spot too," rejoined the schoolmaster "for the sun is low and we must return to Midland."

"Not a bad place to put up at—the Bay Hotel?" remarked Canon Battershall as they set off.

"Not at all bad; very comfortable rooms and so clean and orderly," agreed the schoolmaster.

"And the table?" Mr. Bonnycastle went on.

"Excellent, so I shall prove this evening," said the Canon. "What becomes of the argument that to have a satisfactory stopping place you must have a licensed bar?"

"Fallen flat, as do all arguments in support of liquor drinking and bars. They are hollow. I once thought it a pleasure and a benefit, if not a necessity to good fellowship. I have changed my mind, I am a teetotaller and have not touched it for years. Even one glass seems to unloose the lowest passions of men. No man is in any way improved by it." So spoke the schoolmaster.

"Did you hear those travellers discussing the comparative merits of hotels with license and without, at lunch to-day?" enquired the Canon.

"I did indeed; they were agreed, saying, 'Take away the bar and at once you improve the whole tone of the place, conduct, meals, rooms.' And surely it stands to reason—abolish the profits of the bar and the innkeeper must attract customers by placing the emphasis elsewhere."

And so they strolled on, conversing freely of matters great and small, in tones both grave and

gay. But Edward who had come as far with them as the bridge over the Wye, halted there unobserved by his companions, and resting his arms upon the rail, stood gazing down upon the black and motionless stream where there was not a trace of beauty save the white water lilies and not a sign of life save a halfbreed lazily fishing for eels from the end of a punt. By lingering thus, he sought to be alone, for his soul was disturbed. He had thought by visiting St. Marie only to gratify his taste for historic spots. Had it been but a battle ground or the site of an Indian village, it would have attracted him as much as did this scene of Jesuit labor. Now he realized he had found more than he expected; he had been stirred somewhat by the compelling power of Jesuit life, that of sacrifice. The schoolmaster's speech had made the past of the place live before his mind. The parson's own appreciation of Christian greatness whether found in Jesuit or in Protestant, and above all, that good man's summing up of the Christian faith, as belief in the Living and ever-present Christ, profoundly affected him.

Moreover he had seen in the past few days into the pure soul of the schoolmaster, and had been charmed by his cultured mind and his genuine delight in noble things. It was more than he could bear to go on with these two men of learning, purity and goodness. "That parson has the mind of a scholar and the heart of a child. And I am as black, sordid and foul as this stagnant and filthy water that rots here and generates only the things

which thrive in dirt. I wish I were in its black depths and done for! But coward that I am, I have not manliness enough in me to end my life; I must live on, a guilty wretch, a traitor to my highest self, a heartbreak to my parents (perhaps in poverty through me) keeping in the back lanes and by-ways of human life, ashamed and afraid to show my face where honest and honourable men walk. Better to be born like that illbred French half-breed there catching eels to satisfy his stomach."

Thus, temporarily relieved, he set off to follow his companions, first turning, however, to say, "Good-bye, old Jesuits; I never cared a snap for you, but these spots interest me: now I have seen your mosquito-infested haunts, you are welcome to them." And so whistling a merry air, he went forward.

But his mood soon changed again, and he said, "I wish I could tell poor old Battershall and have it out with him; but I will not, the fight must go on: so seal up your thoughts in your own black heart D'Arcy Conyers. You may tell them some day." And so saying, he struck his breast above his heart, lighted a cigarette and hurried away from the spot and from his own anxious thoughts.

The day was now well over; though the sun could not be seen it still lingered beyond the green maple woods as though shrinking from its final plunge in the Great Canadian Lakes. There was a wonderful stillness everywhere as Edward crossed the marshland towards the hill and the maple woods and the falling sun, in pursuit of the school-

master and the parson. Although he was a distance from his companions he could see them as two black spots against the darkening woods and betimes he could even hear the sound of their voices; there were no other noises to break the silence, save the intermittent singing of birds, and the klick, klock, klick of the halfbreed's rowlock as he moved from the scene of his fishing.

CHAPTER XXX.

LITTLE JENNIE

THE reader of these pages will have met in former chapters the name of Jennie Carson and must now come into her acquaintance more intimately.

“Little Jennie,” she was called among the neighbours, for she was not only small of stature but was of such disposition as to stir affection in all who knew her without regard to age or sex. There was another reason, however, for prefixing the term “little” to the name of Jennie; she was a cripple, and this was people’s way of uttering and yet suppressing their pity for her. Thus the epithet had great fulness of meaning. It was descriptive of her size, it was a term of endearment, and also one of commiseration, on the lips of those who spoke of her.

And all had regard to Jennie and made kindly mention of her name. The children loved her, she excited not the jealousy of other women, and even the roughest men were sensitive to the delicacy of her charms as it might be to the beauty and breath of a violet half hidden among the commoner flowers. The appeal she made to all sorts and conditions was akin to the mystery of infancy in its

power to unseal the fountains of good even in the souls of the depraved.

Jennie knew full well that she was always designated little, and yet so entire was her redemption from joy or pride in the physical, that she felt it neither sting nor slur; and no one ever thought of explaining, more is the pity, that it was above all a love term uttered concerning her.

Little Jennie's misfortune was the result of an accident met with in childhood which left her lame of one leg all her life and imposed the necessity of crutches. Other bodily ills came in the wake of this and Jennie never knew the robust health which one born of her parents should have enjoyed without stint. But so wily are the ways of nature that the very weakness of Jennie's body imparted additional strength to her mind and freedom to her soul; so much was it after this manner that she grew to seem only a spirit tenting in the miserable body.

In childhood she was the happiest of mortals, untouched with resentment and without impatience though often baffled in her efforts and always doing with pain and difficulty what her companions accomplished with ease and pleasure. Yet a word of complaint was never known to escape her lips.

She had bright, rounded eyes of blue, delicate features, and translucent countenance. She was gifted also with a nice sense of humour and many a time each day her merry eyes were seen to twinkle, following one of her own happy remarks.

In the matter of activity she came to be a veritable humming bird and, like that beautiful crea-

ture in another way, she had a passion for flowers. One might see her get her little basket, support it about her neck on a bit of string, take her crutch and fly off among the fields to gather the blooms of the white daisy or the buttercup; but not until she had said good-bye to everyone about her and placed a kiss on every cheek. And how she rejoiced in the creatures of the farm, the frolicking lamb, the bunting calf, the squeally little pigs, the tiny chicks about their dish of morning milk, drinking by sips and looking to heaven in thankfulness as she would say, after every one of them.

Her parents feared to send her to school like other children because of her infirmity. Moreover, she knew so much by instinct that she seemed not to need the drilling of the school teacher, and so bright was her intellect that she soon acquired the rudiments of school matters from those who grew up about her and plodded at their books. And what a gift was her memory! And how sensitive her mind to delicate impressions! Thus gifted she gathered the honey of knowledge from many an unseen flower and the joy of it was with her forever.

A sweet thing about Jennie was her interest in work when still quite a child. While she was fond of dolls and toys and played with them, greatly absorbed, her chief pleasure was in work—that is in sharing the work of others. “Let me help”, she would say in imploring tone of voice, and often she cried when the wish, for some kind reason or other, was not granted.

Thus for many years the joys of youth sus-

tained her; but the awakening came at last. Not that she ever found nature less than fascinating though it changed its glory, but that one day womanhood awoke in her. It was an entrancing vision; and then it began to fade and it vanished when Jennie saw herself to be a cripple and an invalid for life. A gloom fell upon her—the heavy gloom of disappointment at finding that her way to woman's paradise was blocked through no doing of her own. And those about her, D'Arcy among them, noticed the fallen countenance of little Jennie.

After the manner of country homes, nothing passed in words between Jennie and her mother or her robust and beautiful sister Phyllis. One Sunday, however, in the little steepled church among the pines where their murmur and the running brook is ever heard, the matter cleared itself up without human intervention.

It happened in this way. A few voices, more accustomed to shouting at cows and horses than to singing, were joining in Jemima Luke's beautiful hymn, beginning:

“I think when I read that sweet story of old,”

when the lines were come to:—

“I wish that His hands had been laid on my head
That His arm had been thrown around me.”

Jennie's soul received its message like a flash of light.

Her mother, sitting beside her in the pew, saw that Jennie was trying hard to keep the tears back, in eyes which had not often wept in the sight of others. Mrs. Carson was a sane mother and moved a little closer to Jennie for the moment and then when they knelt down side by side for prayer, she slipped her arm through her daughter's, and their hands locked in fond understanding.

Jennie had seen the glory of one way of life fade; now she looked upon the exceeding glory of another, and knew that heaven has other arms than human ones for the embracing of its children.

Some might say this was the moment of Jennie's conversion. Let it not be so considered; think of it rather as a moment of discovery with all the joy of discovery in it. She only saw the meaning of a force and a process which long years had been at work. It would indeed be pale hope were God to suspend operations in us every time we ceased to think of Him. His working ceases not with our thinking, nor the growing of things of the field and forest with our sleeping.

After this moment in church, Jennie lived consciously the life which heretofore she had lived naturally; but then in the consciousness of living lies the greater part of its joy.

There was a spring of water not far from Jennie's home, round the shoulder of the hill just beyond the yard in the edge of the forest. It always flowed quite freely, filling a basin-like depression in the ground and running away again in a little streamlet where the cows drank. The

spring, never without its charm for Jennie, became yet more attractive after her experience in church and often she might be seen in summer time sitting by it alone with her knitting or sewing; in deeper moments the work dropped and her eyes fixed themselves in meditation on the flowing water. It was always bubbling up and yet it made no sound; this attracted her and held her attention. And ever it was carrying up the silver sand and the living water, she knew not from whence. She had found something not unlike this spring in her own soul and had given it watchfulness and bright thought many years ere Edward came out of the night and the ruins of the life of fraud and showy pleasure, and took, as by accident, from her hand in the early morning hour, her burden.

And while Edward loved the society of Phyllis he found himself most frequently going to the assistance of little Jennie. Not that she had any of the attraction of a woman for him; quite the reverse, if the full truth were spoken. To him she was indeed only an unfortunate little girl, though of sufficient years to be a woman. Edward, however, was endowed with sufficient astuteness to know that he could best commend himself to the other members of the household by giving attention to Jennie; this he did as we have seen from the very first, as naturally as though impelled to it by instinct or habit. Jennie was fond of growing flowers, and Edward would carry water for them in the dry season after the hard day's work was over or at the noon hour when he came in from work. She was often found in the kitchen

washing dishes; as Edward passed through on some errand he would insist on sharing this ugly task that he might render help to Jennie.

And when the autumn came Jennie went often to the apple orchard. The good red apples shaken off by the wind, she would pick and carry home, and the over ripe ones place in little piles for the pigs. Edward watched these opportunities and often made Jennie promise to wait until he should return from the field, to do the carrying for her.

Thus Edward all unwittingly learned something new; he began to think of others. This struck at the root of the life he had so far lived.

Then, too, as days went by and Edward found in her a new and powerful attraction not of the physical kind, he saw in her daily round of lovingness that the little human life was animated and impelled by a spirit too beautiful to permit of its being classed as merely natural, and too positive to allow any question as to its reality. To fall in love with Jennie as a woman, never so much as occurred to Edward; it would have been unnatural; but not to love her, in another higher sense would have been impossible. At length Edward came to be very fond of her and to find much joy in sharing, every day, a portion of his strength with her.

Thus the little crippled girl had wrought in him a wonder of which he was not aware for many days; she dislodged the centre of his thoughts—the little god of self was thrown from its pedestal; his heart was going out to the beauty which lay hid behind Jennie's unattractive form.

The story of his final vanquishment is quickly and sadly told.

It was autumn again and the apples were ripe in the orchard. And so it was agreed between them that the gathering should begin on a certain evening when Edward had come in from ploughing. But Jennie, anxious to surprise him, entered the orchard long ere he came, and having put things in order for the work and picked up the fruit thrown down by the wind, unwisely climbed up the ladder to pluck the apples still clinging to the branches; reaching too far after a beautifully coloured one lest it should drop and be bruised, she overbalanced and fell to the ground.

For one in strength this experience would have been a matter serious enough—but for poor little Jennie, the impact and the fright together were bound to prove more than her frame could endure. Fortunately Edward came in from his ploughing earlier than usual or she might have lain there longer than she did. As it happened, he was almost within distinct sound of the fall—and the faint thud in the direction of the orchard he did hear, as he thought, and the echo as it were of a call. Divining something to be amiss, he ran, leaving his horses loose in the yard to do as they might. His brown face was reddened with anxiety, his hat was thrown aside, his dark curly hair seemed to stand straight on end, and never did man in overalls and heavy farm boots so run. He quickly leaped the fence into the orchard and was stricken at heart to behold a little heap on the ground beneath the autumn apple tree—it was

Jennie. The ladder was in place, the ground was strewn with the apples and the overturned bucket was but a pace away. Jennie hearing him coming, called out, "I'm all right, Edward."

No one else had received intimation of the occurrence until Phyllis saw Edward's horses standing by the stable door unattended, and, coming out to the platform to seek an explanation, she beheld him kneeling by something at a distance in the orchard.

Jennie spoke again as Edward reached her, "I'm not hurt, Edward—that is, not much."

Edward's sharp eye, however, gave him quite other and more terrible information, and taking her in his arms like a child he carried her towards the house. Seeing Phyllis coming, he called out as best he could, "Jennie will be all right, don't hurry." The anxious sister drew near, however, and perceived that this was a kind untruth.

Together they bore her in and laid her on the couch. Painful excitement was now rampant in the Carson family. Edward was dispatched at top speed for the doctor and Favorite was driven as never before.

Meantime Jennie was in pain—great pain—but no hero on the field of battle could have borne it more nobly, for she had known suffering all her life, and had contested many times the extremity of its power. Her countenance grew pale but did not lose its spiritual expression, indeed, it rather gained in this very particular. When the doctor came in she greeted him and when Edward entered

a moment later she smiled. He smiled too, then bowed forward, and kissed her on the forehead.

She lingered through the night and Edward never left her side. The family, borne up by the Doctor's words, retired. Moreover, they had seen Jennie endure and recover from so much, that they were disposed to give weight to the Doctor's optimistic words. And then they knew that of all her friends she would be happiest with Edward.

In the morning at daybreak there was a silvery dewy silence on everything and then the sunlight, that chillsome red sunlight of autumn. Jennie's eyes were wide open, the sunlight came through the window and brightened her room and one ray fell upon her face. Jennie moved her lips as though to kiss Edward. He saw it; he kissed her; and she was gone.

CHAPTER XXXI.

WHERE EDWARD REVEALED HIS SECRET

EUGENIE BATTERSHALL came more frequently to the Carson's after the death of little Jennie; not that she needed this new motive for doing so; on the contrary, her affection for Phyllis was reason enough for making her visits as numerous and as long as possible. From their first meeting these two young women were friends in no shallow sense—something like an electric spark leaped from eye to eye, from smile to smile, from soul to soul, when they first looked upon each other, and the passing of two years' intercourse had but served to deepen their affection and to render it more like honey in the honeycomb.

After the tragedy of Jennie's fall from the apple tree, Eugenie's love for the Carsons became a passion, and her desire to comfort Phyllis took on the nature of the divine anxiety to heal the wounded heart. And so Eugenie lost no opportunity of going for an hour, a day, or even a week to that home in which she had found so much reality of affection, of refinement and of unobtrusive delight in spiritual things.

What therefore could be more in harmony with all that is best within us than that Edward Casky

who had been so loved by dear little Jennie, who had indeed borne her tenderly in his arms from the orchard to the house, had carried her upstairs, driven for the physician with such desperate haste, watched by her side till dawn came, and with the dawn, a new and glorious life for Jennie—what I ask could be more natural and likely than that this young man, no matter what the crime which kept him in this place of seclusion, should now find an abiding place in the affection of Eugenie Battershall, a young woman in whom the natural and the spiritual were so at one, in such perfect harmony?

As for Edward his old reticence was thrown aside, after the passing of Jennie and he fled not forth, as once he did, to the open fields that he might avoid possible detection by Eugenie. On the contrary he grew bolder, he began to linger where her shadow might fall upon him as she passed or her great blue eyes might light up his soul and cause both hope and fear to wrestle on his countenance; and when a moment chanced to come for conversation it was a moment of delight indeed.

One day during the winter Eugenie and Phyllis, quietly sewing in a cozy little room upstairs, fell to conversing about Edward; and Phyllis, in love herself at the time, was not slow to perceive the signs of something more than friendship in her companion.

“But who he is,” remarked Phyllis, as she plied her needle,” and why he is here, God only knows. Like yourself dear, he is a blessing to us all now

that Jennie is gone. I think father would die were he to leave, for he is so fond of him."

"Well Phyllis," said Eugenie, "I admire him too. He is so interesting in conversation, and how fond he was of Jennie! And then he is not foolish—that is, you know Phyllis, we can have long chats without the show of anything more than mere friendship."

"Indeed, he is the most self-contained creature I ever knew;" replied Phyllis, "he has been that way ever since he came; and how he could see you without making love, I don't know!"

"Oh Phyllis you are a darling old thing but everybody does not think as you do. I will say Phyllis dear, that Edward is attractive as a companion. And he is such a gentleman in his manner and behaviour! And there is never the slightest presumption about him. But there is a gulf between us; we beckon to each other across it and that is all.' Then leaning towards her friend and laughing sweetly Eugenie remarked, "Phyllis dear, sometimes when we have chanced to walk together I have wished the gulf were not quite so wide."

Phyllis who had never heard Eugenie say so much before and desired to encourage her to greater freedom with Edward, stopped her sewing for the moment and looking directly and kindly at her, said:

"You sweet thing! I can assure you Edward is a man of fine feelings whatever the mystery which surrounds him. In his two years here none of us has ever seen anything rough or unmanly

about him. We think the world of him, but no one ever dares to ask any question!"

This conversation was suddenly broken in upon by Mrs. Carson calling out that tea was ready and demanding the presence of the young women without delay.

Eugenie would fain have continued the subject, now for the first time mooted between them but as it happened, nothing more was said for many days to come. Only the women of the house drank tea that afternoon, and when it was over Eugenie accompanied Mr. Carson, who was going to town on business, and so returned to the rectory full of strange sweet thoughts and wondering greatly; the fire of love had been kindled in her heart—the words of Phyllis were like a flaming torch and her soul like tinder.

Meantime it had come to be so with Edward that he required all his iron strength of will and habit to keep within the bounds of wisdom. For one thing he was desperately in love with Eugenie, though he never so much as whispered it to Phyllis, and for another, he knew who Eugenie was, and longed to confide in her, and so to learn something of his mother, the Gatineau, the dear old father, and to talk of spots about Danford familiar to them both in childhood.

While this was the mental state of these young people it so happened that they did not look again upon each others faces for several months. Lent came on with its quieting of social life, and its added duties in the Parish, and the storms of March piled great white snowbanks on all the

lanes and roadways, making them impassable. And when the long sunny days returned and thawing got under way, all traffic was at an end till the bare ground appeared, and wheeling began for the season.

And so it was spring once more, and the time of the singing of birds, the blooming of flowers, the unfolding of leaves, and the planting of garden plots when Eugenie and Edward looked one morning into each other's eyes.

The meeting came about in this way. Phyllis never quite satisfied with the rough work of the farm and its money making, spent every moment which might be caught for the purpose, cultivating flowers. In summer her garden was the most attractive in the countryside, and in winter every available window had its pots of flowering plants. Eugenie, on the contrary, though she revelled in the beauty of flowers and of all the out-of-doors, had yet but little knowledge of their cultivation. That portion of her time which she might spare from doing duties about the house and parish, she spent at the piano over which she had acquired the mastery.

It came to pass therefore that on a Saturday morning in the early part of June that Phyllis took Favorite and drove into Barrie to lend a hand to Eugenie and her mother in setting out the flower beds about the rectory. This kindly act was performed, however, on one condition clearly stipulated beforehand, that Eugenie must return to the Carsons in the afternoon and spend Sunday in the country; and return she did to the great

delight of Phyllis, the old folks, and—of Edward, who, after the vision of his mother in the woods—longed with the deepest most painful longing, to learn somewhat of her as soon as possible. He resolved, therefore, to unbosom himself to Eugenie should opportunity of doing so fall to his lot.

When Phyllis and Eugenie returned to the Carson home, evening was well advanced. Edward's work kept him out of doors till late, and darkness had fallen by the time supper was over, so that no chance came and none was sought that night, of a quiet chat with Eugenie.

And when Sunday morning arose, it was bright; the world was indeed a merry place with the singing of birds; trees and shrubs, yea, the very earth itself was breathing a soft sweetness like the breath of a sleeping infant; and delight with life, which is so akin to love, was in the very air. Edward was resolved and it shone on his face, it beat at his heart, it sounded in the tread of his feet as he went hither and thither about the chores. As for Eugenie her spirits were fully awake and she rose with the singing of the birds, dressed prettily in white and blue, tripped happily down stairs, turned aside into the parlor where the piano was, and very soon music was filling every room of the house and flowing out through doors and windows to mingle with the living song-world outside.

Edward's plan to get Eugenie alone was simple enough. All would go to St. Bride's Church for divine service during the morning; he would drive

the party in the double carriage with the grey horses; John Glover, to whom Phyllis was engaged, was certain to return with the Carsons to dinner; the old people without doubt would enjoy a Sunday nap in the course of the afternoon; and as for Phyllis and John, why of course they would be sufficient unto themselves; thus he and Eugenie, very naturally and almost of necessity would find themselves free to enjoy each others companionship.

And so it came to pass, as the Scripture saith, that after dinner, Edward, hearing rapturous music issuing from the piano, came quietly into the little drawing room. At his entry Eugenie turned about on the piano stool and met Edward's great brown eyes looking intently upon her. He smiled, not without a suggestion of nervousness and said, "Lovely it is to hear the music Miss Battershall, but I have a suggestion to make if you will allow me. Let us walk down to the brook and to Jennie's spring. Would you like to?" he enquired gently.

"I should be delighted," Eugenie replied. "I shall get my hat," which she did, and the two were off together smiling happily—but smiling also to conceal deeper emotions and more tender, beneath those smiles.

"Jennie loved the spring, you know, Miss Battershall," remarked Edward, as they went along.

"Yes, indeed, I do know it."

"I often go and sit for a few moments alone as she used to do," he continued. "She taught me to love the spot and I do."

The brook was quickly reached; it was murmuring still with the gathered waters of springtime and the result of recent rains. Turning to the right they went round a large grey rock partly overgrown with moss and topped by a single white birch, as if it were a sentry to guard the sacred spot; and beyond they saw the spring bubbling up from underneath another white limestone rock grown upon by cedar trees and spruces.

Edward removed his straw hat as though he had entered a sanctuary, and the two stood side by side for several minutes watching the crystal water playing with the silver sands, then spreading out to form a pool, and after, narrowing again to flow away, a tiny rivulet, into the forest.

Edward was first to speak: "Jennie's spring!" was all he said. He could trust himself no further, so varied and pent up were the emotions of his soul, and turning about he walked towards the rustic seat which was but a few feet off and so placed that from it the spring could best be seen. On reaching the spot he did not sit down, however, but turned again towards his companion with a smile on his face, and, seeing her approaching, beckoned her to take the seat, at the end of which it was his purpose, as Eugenie perceived, to remain standing.

Miss Battershall was astonished to see that a smile had come so quickly to Edward's countenance, and, once again the thought flashed across her mind as she looked at him, what a mystery and a contradiction this fellow is, choking with emotion one moment, smiling almost cynically the

next. The effect of the observation was to check up Miss Battershall's own feelings and to give freer range to her purely mental faculties; forgetting therefore her sorrow for Jennie she began a penetrating analysis of her companion's countenance and whole bearing. She looked at him steadily, enquiringly, but without the suggestion of a smile on her face.

Edward could have stared any ordinary mortal out of countenance and yet have smiled and retained his composure but he quailed before the gaze of Eugenie. The smile fled instantly, his face grew slightly pallid, and his eyes fell to the ground.

"Miss Battershall," said he, gripping the end of the settle with both hands, "I have a terrible thing to tell you to-day about myself, if you will do me the kindness to listen."

Distress now came to his voice and deep sympathy came to the face of Eugenie.

"Certainly I will hear you," said she.

"There is not a soul in this place who knows it," he went on, "but I can trust you Miss Battershall, and you only can help me."

Ah, that pen or brush could have painted the countenance of Eugenie at that moment—such beauty, such sympathy and yet what strength!

"I'll be glad to help you," she said quietly, to which Edward replied:

"Well, here it is, Miss Battershall, I am D'Arcy Conyers, whom you knew once on the *Gatineau*!"

Eugenie gazed at him a second and uttered not a word; then sprang from the settle and walked to-

wards the spring, but instantly returned, and spoke enquiringly, with mingled indignation and sympathy in her voice. "From Aylwin by the Gatineau—from Ballymahon on the Danford?"

Edward with averted face was in silent tears; he uttered no words of reply but only bowed his head.

Then pulling himself together, he turned again and said, "Sit down Miss Battershall, and let me tell you the rest. I am not fit to have a seat beside you so I shall sit on the grass at the end."

And there they stayed for an hour and more, Eugenie listening with amazement, and yet with gratitude that she could hear and might be able to help, while Edward related the story of his downfall—how he had been in a position of trust, misused funds, falsified his returns and books, drank, gambled, fled, was pursued, found a refuge here and for some reason unknown to him was never ferreted out and arrested.

"Miss Battershall," said he at last, "all this, however, is not now the matter in which you can help me. I am in agony to hear from home, from mother and dear old dad. It is in this you and no one else can do me a kindness."

"Yes," she said, with great tenderness, "we can help, father hears, not often, but sometimes, for he loved his Gatineau people more than those of any other parish, and occasionally he writes them even yet. I will find out for you."

O, Miss Battershall, I hope you will before long, for I am afraid about Mother. You will think I am crazy when I tell you that I believe I saw her

spirit in the woods one winter day as night was falling."

Eugenie was now looking intently at her wretched companion and great tears began to gather in her eyes. Edward was quick to perceive her emotion and divined its significance. "Do you know anything about her?" he enquired, "tell me, Miss Battershall," he exclaimed with terrible anxiety on his face and in every word. "Is she dead?"

There was no response from sweet Eugenie save the quivering of her lips and the flowing more freely of her tears as she leaned towards the stricken-hearted Edward.

"Is she dead?" he enquired again, with agony in his voice.

And Eugenie bowed once in assent, and then grasped Edward by his right hand, only to drop it again on the instant. Edward sat motionless for a second, looking straight before him towards the spring; then he began to grow pale and to gasp a little for breath; next instant he fell backward on the grass as white as a sheet.

Eugenie leaped up, took his straw hat which fortunately was tightly plaited and lined, ran to the spring, filled it with cool water, hurried back and dashed what remained of it on his face, then she stooped over him, loosened his neckband, bathed his wrists, and wet his lips. After a little time, to her intense relief, she observed the colour returning to his face.

"Thank God," she ejaculated, then ran to the spring again, dipped her handkerchief in the water

and returning to Edward, bathed his wrists once more.

Edward looked up into Eugenie's eyes and spoke with some effort saying, "Can you ever forgive me, Miss Battershall? I can trust you I know."

"I have nothing to forgive, and you may trust me to keep this terrible secret and to do what I can."

Soon Edward was able to sit up, and pointing Eugenie to a cup hanging on the branch of a tree by the spring, which she had not observed in her excitement, he asked for a drink, and shortly afterwards requested that she should depart to the house and leave him alone to think and to recover his composure.

"I shall go for the cows presently," he said, "just tell them so if they enquire, and say that I will not have tea till after milking time."

And so they parted.

CHAPTER XXXII.

EUGENIE

WHO will tell us what beauty is? “It is the glory of God to conceal a thing” says a very wise man. This at all events is His way with beauty. He has covered it from the vulgar eye with clouds and thick darkness, but to the poet and the pure in heart, beauty is only veiled and no more. It is elusive, it is mysterious; we pursue it, we worship before it, but to come at it, to possess it, to make it our own! Ah, the longing, the oft repeated effort, and the failure!

Beauty takes its highest form in woman and its spells gather in winsome mystery on her countenance. This at all events was Edward’s opinion with regard to Eugenie Battershall; and I for one have no heart to dispute his judgment. It is but fact unadorned, that every one loved her as well as Edward, so sweet was she and beautiful. And the wonder of the thing is, that when the cleverest analyst of beauty had catalogued the defects of her features to the satisfaction of some at least of her maiden companions she had but to move her eyes, or smile, or let a blush come to her cheek, and the logic arrayed against her broke down, and the would-be destroyer of Eugenie’s excellent beauty fled downcast and in despair.

It is but of slight value to write about her appearance, saying that her hair was very heavy and black, and had just wave enough in it to touch it with the unusual; and that her quiet forehead was very white, and her eyebrows very dark; and that her eyes were large and soft and very blue with dark lashes. There was seldom more of colour on her white oval face than the red of her rounded lips and the flush on her cheek in times of emotion.

But the beauty which might be seen there was not of form or colour; one can only say it was living, it was fitful, it came and partly went again, it was tantalizing; it was the soul playing in her eyes like sunlight through filmy clouds. It was not in the mirror when she looked, neither was it caught by the camera, for the plate was dull of sense and the photographer more so, and together they made a picture of the face, not the soul. So Eugenie was acknowledged most beautiful when least conscious of it, and while all, except the wicked, found joy in her beautiful countenance, she herself had in it, but little satisfaction. And she was not only beautiful beyond words and delightfully unconscious of her charms, but she was a devotee of everything lovely and winsome, which, as is always the case, called forth from their reticence and seclusion, the beautiful and joyous of the souls of others.

Often in the morning while the townsfolk were bestirring themselves about affairs of business, and the farmers were travelling in over dusty roads for a similar purpose, Eugenie would leave the rectory, and go off alone to revel in quiet and

in beauty. And the reader may chuckle if he will, when we affirm that she most frequently betook herself in her quest of what her soul desired, to the old graveyard under the pines on the hillside. "What a place!" you say; "Of all spots for a girl at once beautiful and seeking beauty to go to! A graveyard! Heavens!"

For Eugenie Battershall, however, there was no such reason for avoiding the spot. Graves there were to be sure, graves trodden level with the ground and headstones fallen prostrate as it were to protect the sacred earth under which lay the bones of those over whom deepest tears had been shed.

But for all man's neglect it was a pleasant place to Eugenie Battershall and the place of living spirits rather than of dead bodies; and the grass grew long above the neglected graves as though to cover the shame of living man; and the great pines spread their all-protecting branches above the places of the sleeping; and the winds and the birds made music, sweet and solmen music in the air, as it were the choir of the blessed. Eugenie loved to think she could see the old church standing where now there were but the weed-covered stones of its foundation, and the carriages drawn up, and the coloured liveries of old military days, and the kindly parson with side whiskers, and the people in quaint clothing, coming and going and talking in solemn or in cheerful tones.

And Eugenie had other spots of loitering and of interest because of their beauty and their quiet. One of these lay beyond the old churchyard in a

a deep valley. Through this valley she never failed to pass because the flowers were more prolific there in summer and the trees more attractive to the singing birds, being farther from rough boys and treacherous cats, but chiefly her interest in the valley centered in an old man, a carpenter who lived with his two grandsons there on the hillside in a neat little white dwelling among some apple trees.

Eugenie often passed this way and as often spoke to Mr. Bristol, as his name was; so much was it so that Eugenie's passings were to his aged eyes what they were also to the youngest in the parish, a sight most refreshing, and one which brought a smile to his haggard face. His little dwelling was apart from all thoroughfares, and on a hillside, as we have said, so that no one went that way on business, and few visited him; perhaps it was for this very reason that sweet Eugenie made a point of going to see him on her walks. Even in winter she would put on her snowshoes and make her way thither, and on the bright snowy mornings which were not too frosty, Mr. Bristol was sure to say, "Perhaps Miss Eugenie will come to-day," and come she would indeed.

And Mr. Bristol would watch for the signs of spring with great eagerness and longing, for then Eugenie would come more frequently. And hence no sounds brought greater joy to his aged ear than the cawing of the first crow on the pine tops; and when the robin came and chirruped, he was sure to seat himself in his big chair on the platform, and to say, "Well, God be praised, Eugenie will

soon come every week, for the walking will be good. And to his grandson who lived with him he would remark, as the sun made gentle havoc of the snow, "Well, Charlie, I hear the sound of water gurgling in the valley yonder, I shall soon hear Eugenie laughing."

And so one morning quite suddenly while seated in his big chair on the platform he beheld Miss Eugenie coming and waving her hand—and then heard her call out.

"Good morning, Mr. Bristol! Good morning, spring has come again."

"Ah, there you are," he exclaimed, "I thought this air would bring you forth; I know the voice though I see you but dimly." And he removed the pipe from his mouth and the cap from his head, and shuffled about to shake her hand and to give her a seat.

"Very glad to see you again after the long winter, Miss Eugenie. And how much longer that winter would have seemed had it not been for your visits and the papers you brought to me and read to me."

"I shall often see you now, Mr. Bristol, so I shall not stay long this morning, I must be off to see the schoolmaster and to call on a few other friends on the way. Good-morning, I'll be back again soon!"

The deep short valley of which we have spoken lay right beyond and below the carpenter's home. Though it was mostly a thicket there were also some scattered pine trees standing about and there were grass patches in summer where Mr.

Bristol's cow cropped and dinkled her bell, and a path ran through its depths, crossed a babbling brook and led up the hillside beyond, to where a grove of pines stood. From here a well trodden lane or kind of private road ran on in an irregular course into the fields where a few houses of the poorer sort were scattered about. Into every one of these Eugenie entered if it were but for a moment, to give a smile and a word of greeting; she would grasp the mother by the hand, insist on kissing Peggy, have a race after Johnnie, and catch and kiss him too, and seldom did she leave without pointing her finger at this delinquent or that and saying: "Ah, you little monkey, I did not see you in Sunday School last Sunday. Be certain to come next time or I'll be after you!"

Whatever the form of greeting or the cleverly concealed admonition, Eugenie's visits were looked for and thought of with smiling faces by every inhabitant in the scattered dwellings of the place.

And it was Eugenie's way to turn readily from joy in human beings to delight in nature itself. As she left the cottages on this particular morning and set off again to unburden her heart to the schoolmaster, she might have been heard to exclaim while standing on the brow of the hill, overlooking the town and the lake, "Nature is wonderful, seldom more so than now! There is the green hillside silvered with dew and yet touched with the faintest yellow of the morning light; and the air is so soft upon my face and so delicately odorous; and the birds, how they revel in the glory of the

morning! And that patch of rosebuds waking in the dew and the light—how infinitely tender!”

It was even so, as I have described, with Eugenie Battershall; think it not mere delight in words on my part. And something more is true, also, which it may be was the spring of her delight in nature and in those who dwelt in cottages remote from sham and social twaddle; even this is true; that very morning ere she could utter the above words about nature itself she lifted up her face to,—well—to God (what better word) and said “O tender God who made it all I give Thee the adoration of my soul.”

So expressing herself she flew at once down the pathway and came to the schoolmaster's house by the lakeside. On reaching the spot she did not enter the house but passed down the lane and through the gate into the garden and there, as expected, she saw her father's dear friend and her own, one of the choicest souls of his day, coat off and sleeves rolled up, bending low over a lettuce bed revelling in the joy of the soil before the day's work began in the school house by the hill.

Mr. Bonnycastle on seeing Eugenie approaching rose from his work and went forward to greet her with a smile on his face as sweet as ever played on the countenance of a noble-hearted man.

“How nice to see you Eugenie, dear! But why this early visit? All well at the rectory I hope?”

“Yes all well thank you,” replied Eugenie.

But the schoolmaster perceived, however, that there was something unusual in her tone of voice—a faint suggestion of sadness, and resting on his

spade handle, he looked deep into her eyes, saw a tear fall, and then a slight averting of the gaze as in diffidence. "Sit down Eugenie and let's have a chat," said he gently.

And so there side by side on a green settle, the spruce trees rising behind them, the vegetable garden spreading in front, and the lake glinting through the fringe of heavy forest on its bank, Mr. Bonnycastle listened and sweet Eugenie told all she knew about Edward Casky, as related in this story; yea, and something more, before the acknowledging of which she grasped Mr. Bonnycastle's hand and said, "Oh, Mr. Bonnycastle, I must tell you something more."

He then took her two hands in his and his countenance was overspread with the tenderness of a father for a child. "Eugenie, dear, what is it?" he enquired.

Eugenie then looked at him and looked till her great eyes filled again with tears—she brushed them away—and smiled at him—and was never, as he thought, half so sweet as then. Mr. Bonnycastle then smiled too, squeezed her hands more tightly and said, "I know my dear, I know. It will all come right yet and we shall talk of this again. I must now go to my school for there is the bell."

Eugenie lingered a little in the garden after Mr. Bonnycastle had left her and then entered the house to spend a few pleasant moments with the schoolmaster's wife before returning to the rectory.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE AUTUMN FAIR

IT was a dark day, without a crease or fold in the grey covering of the sky. Many were the fears, therefore lest an autumn rain might at any moment come down and spoil the crowning event of the Fair, the trotting, in the afternoon. Hence there was heard on all sides a rumbling of happy voices, not a few exclamations of delight, and, on the part of a group of enthusiasts, a cheer, when, at three o'clock sharp, the light brightened on the countryside, and the sun bursting a moment later through the clouds, fell on the buildings, on the moving crowds, on the hurrying vehicles, on the noisome stock sheds, and beyond the high fenced enclosure, on the sparkling waters of Lake Simcoe, spreading away to where a majestic group of pines stood on its farther shore.

It was at this moment that the gate opened, and the impatient horses entered the trotting ring amid great excitement and surprise on the part of the spectators who were not looking for this event till an hour later.

“What could have happened?” the onlookers enquired one of another. “Why it is an hour too soon; there’s some mistake!”

“No, there’s no mistake” said one, “I’ll bet

you old Alex. Carson's bound to have this trot and he's afraid of the rain. Look at him there among the Directors! Aint he the old sport!"

The officials referred to were grouped about the stand in the centre of the ring and Mr. Carson's great form was easily seen moving among them, his red face beaming and his side whiskers trimmed with great care for the occasion.

"Say, that mare of his is a dandy! — Like a bird!" said one observer.

"Can she go?" enquired another.

"You bet she can!" replied a third.

"I wonder if that guy can drive her?" asked the first.

"If he couldn't old Alex. wouldn't have him there," commented a fourth.

At that moment Favorite was turned aside from her competitors, given a short curve about the grounds and came to position on the track. She was a perfect creature, as all avowed, and drew forth applause from the observers. She was grey of colour, slightly dappled about the hinder parts, had a dark grey mane and tail, both of which she carried with great pride. Her head was always in motion, her eyes glanced with quick intelligence, and there was remarkable grace in her movements.

The other contestants were now in action manoeuvring for position, and the next instant all were off around the track, Favorite on the inside trotting beautifully and with great strength, but not leading. A long-reaching bay animal of heavier and rougher build was in advance of her,

throwing back the sand and dust from the roadway with terrible fierceness on all her competitors.

The dense crowd about the fence swayed this way and that keeping watch on the fleeing horses. Favorite travelled very fast, but Edward reined her to the admiration of the spectators and judges alike.

"Say he can drive, can't he! Aint she a dandy! Look at those front feet—don't she handle them well!"

Favorite's course was on the inside of the track for she was slightly smaller than the other animals. It was Edward's policy to keep this advantage by travelling at a steady gait yet just under Favorite's best speed. At the end of the second round she was doing well but not leading. The great bay was still striding furiously, emitting from her straining nostrils her fury and excitement.

Now a black horse began closing in on the bay and was soon passing her. At the sight, cheering burst from the crowd, for the race was only a mile—four times round the course and the third lap was now nearing its end. The black animal, excellently well driven presently came neck to neck with the long striding bay and was gaining steadily upon her as they entered the final round. The bay, thus pressed on her right, broke into a gallop and before she could be brought to her stride again, lost her chance of winning the day.

Favorite was travelling very fast and Edward was reining her strongly. The black was now her new rival in popular favour, both because of his

speed and the beauty of his action; he was equally well driven and was showing no signs of breaking; moreover he was making an appreciable gain on Favorite.

Clearly the race was between these two. Everyone knew the critical moment was now at hand. Edward realized it also and was watching for it. The cheering was wild and continuous as the two beautiful animals neared the second half of the final round. Edward had been holding Favorite with all his might for that instant of testing, making only sufficient speed to keep his position. He now gave her the rein slightly, spoke but one word, heard only by her quick ear, "Favorite"; and, impossible as it seemed to the spectators and judges alike, her nimble feet flew at lightning speed, the cheering became vociferous, the crowds about the fence swayed with excitement; Favorite was gaining on her rival which for some time had been trotting at top speed.

"Will he break?"

"No, he is well trained, and his driver knows his powers, he had reached his limit."

Favorite gains on him, passes him, and dashes across the line the full length of herself and cart before him, the winner of the blue ribbon!

There was only one happier man than Edward on the grounds that day and he was Mr. Carson, whose red face beamed with delight and whose great form rose to youthful height and erectness.

There was another happy mortal there also, for near by the gate among the thronging rustic enthusiasts was beautiful Eugenie, alone that she

might see and enjoy Edward's victory without the necessity of sharing her joy with anyone for the moment. She would see him get the ribbon, she would see him when he passed out in triumph, she might even catch his eye and see his smile.

It was not to be so, however; this flower of her hope, poor girl, was to be plucked at the moment her fair hand was outstretched to take it and press it to her bosom. There was another fate awaiting both her and Edward at that very gate and almost at that moment.

Watching him among the throng in the instant of his triumph were other eyes than those of beautiful Eugenie, with an interest gleaming in them, born not of love, but of a mingled sense of duty and the hope for fame.

The gates were swung wide and the defeated animals unconscious of their failure to win the prize dashed through; the plucky little black was last of these and had his share of cheering as he passed out and then there was the cheer for Edward who smiling his subdued smile drove Favorite towards the exit, while the husky voices of the country folk cheered him lustily. When the gate was reached and Favorite was passing slowly and handsomely out, a hand was laid upon her bridle and she came to a halt. At the same moment another hand was laid on Edward's shoulder; it was that of the old chief of the town police who said, "My prisoner, D'Arcy Conyers, in the King's name."

Eugenie knew what it meant, turned pale, clung to the fence for a moment, swayed, and would

have fallen but that she was taken away by a kindly old country dame, who blessed her sweet face and called her "angel" and said "It was a terrible sight for one so young and pretty to look upon with them lovely eyes."

The excitement of the spectators amounted to consternation and even took the form of indignant threats to rescue Edward, (who was now as popular as Favorite) from the hands of the stupid old chief, as they thought him, and now cursed by not a few of the boys.

The law is respected, however, by Canadian countrymen even when wrongly enforced, and justice must have her way. Then, too, there stood beside the chief, Mac, the giant of the force whom no one cared to cross in the discharge of his duties. So Edward was hurried into a carriage and driven off in the moment of his victory to answer, as he and Eugenie very well knew, for the crime of other days.

Of necessity there was now much enquiring as to the possible cause of his arrest and there were questions about him without end. As for gossip it ran hotfooted everywhere. Some were for blaming the police, and called the chief "A stupid ass, anyhow"; others said "Stupid? Not in this deal for once; well carried off, that job!" Men whispered that they had always been suspicious of that Casky chap and added, "Nobody knows where he came from or what he is doing in the place."

"Mighty clever guy!" one said.

"Too smart for his own good!" another opined.

Strange is it not, how the beast lingers in man!

The crowd is always for deserting and even rending the fallen.

Many streamed down the street towards the little brick police court next the market to see the prisoner if they might, and pick up some elements of knowledge of how Edward Casky's victory had been robbed of its glory.

Eugenie, recovering from the first shock, stepped away quietly through the throng, and arriving at the rectory, entered, went to her room and threw herself in great distress of soul and body upon her bed, knowing everything and not free to speak of it.

Knowledge of what had happened was soon conveyed to Alex. Carson flushed and joyous with the victory of Favorite and Edward.

"What! Arrested! Are you drunk or mad? Edward taken by the police!"

"Yes, both the chief and the deputy chief, in fact the whole force has taken him into custody."

Without another word Mr. Carson set off as fast as his age and form would allow, toward the exit where Edward had been apprehended. Here he was accosted by Canon Battershall and the schoolmaster who were at that moment driving up hoping to witness the race. At once they perceived the evidences of distress and annoyance on their great friend's countenance.

"Why, Mr. Carson, what's gone wrong?" enquired the parson.

"Nothing serious, I hope" said the schoolmaster

"Serious! A terrible thing! A damnable thing! I beg your pardon Mr. Battershall, you will have

to forgive my language; they've arrested Edward!

"What, Edward Casky?" enquired the Canon with astonishment in his voice.

"Yes, Edward. An outrage!"

"An outrage indeed, Mr. Carson!" replied the clergyman, "An infamous thing!"

The schoolmaster with a cool expression on his face studied Mr. Carson's countenance and said nothing but "yes" with a very prolonged intonation, then he stepped from the carriage and insisted on Mr. Carson taking his place beside Mr. Battershall that he might be carried at once to police headquarters.

They drove along as quickly as Mr. Battershall's old red nag could trot. The sidewalks were thronged with pedestrians all commenting on and guessing about what had happened and exclaiming." There's Mr. Carson now with the minister, going to the Police Station, I'll bet."

"I'll bail him out if it takes every cent I have." said Mr. Carson to his companion.

"I'll try to get him into my custody. I'd trust him anywhere," replied the preacher.

"Trust him" ejaculated Mr. Carson, "I should say so!"

It was not long before they drew up at the Police Station. Both got out quickly, leaving the old nag to nibble a patch of grass by the sidewalk. "She's safe" said the boys, "she can't run away and no one will steal her!"

On entering the Police Office Mr. Carson confronted the chief at once and like a man in a passion exclaimed:

“What the deuce do you mean Roberts, by this arrest?”

The chief was trembling after the experience at the Fair Grounds for he was growing old in the service of the town, and was no longer as robust as in his young days, nor as fully alert of mind. One characteristic he still possessed. He was plucky and as obstinate as ever. There was a quiver in his voice but no pallor on his countenance. As a matter of fact he had quite enjoyed the experience of arresting Edward.

“Mr. Carson,” said he, “I have been watching this chap for two years. He has had no moustache till lately; to-day he has one. There is his photograph, sent on by the Police of Montreal, and there is the description in these letters. If I’m wrong, then I’ll quit. He is the man wanted for absconding, I am now satisfied, and I have wired the authorities to this effect.”

Mr. Carson was stricken with dumbness and remained fixed in posture and gaze. There was no gainsaying the likeness of the photograph to the countenance of Edward Casky.

“Chief,” said Mr. Carson at last, “this is terrible.”

“Battershall what do you think of it?”

“I hope the chief is mistaken.”

“No mistake, sir, I am afraid, too long watching this case, studied him here at the market every week for the last two months.”

“But chief, I cannot let him stay in the lock-up, I will go bail for him.”

“And I too,” said the parson. “Let him come

to the rectory. I'll guarantee to produce him when wanted.

"It would not be fair to you, sir, I'll take no chance of his escape. No need of exposure."

"I'll go bail to any extent Roberts," said Mr. Carson, "but he must come out of that cell. A finer boy never lived!" As he thought it and said so, a lump came in the throat of Mr. Carson.

Then the chief spoke and said, "I'll permit it, Mr. Carson, on one condition only. I'll get him a room in the hotel. We can slip him in through the back door there and Mac will stay by him till word comes from Montreal."

"Good!" said Canon Battershall, "but I'd rather keep him myself. However, as you say, chief."

"I must see him at once" said Mr. Carson.

"And I too," said Mr. Battershall.

"Better not, gentlemen. Leave him quiet a time. You can see him in the hotel after he is settled for the night."

"Very well, if it must be so," assented Mr. Carson.

Both kindly gentlemen turned at once and strode along the creaking hall leading to the outer door and went to the rectory to hold sad converse over the arrest of one so attractive and yet so mysteriously silent as D'Arcy Conyers, alias Edward Casky.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

TWO GLEAMING EYES

IT was a fine October afternoon with a red light on everything when D'Arey Conyers, stepped out of the room of the hotel in which he had been confined. Immediately upon his arrest a telegram had been sent to Police Headquarters in Montreal informing the authorities of what had taken place, and enquiring what course should be pursued. At noon the next day, the following wire was received by Chief Roberts: "Conyers matter settled satisfactorily shortly after his escape; sorry you were not informed. Prisoner may be released."

At D'Arey's side as he left the hotel was his faithful and honest old friend Alex. Carson. Both faces bore the marks of anxiety and sleeplessness. D'Arey's countenance was pale and drawn and his great dark eyes glanced about as it were in quest of the quickest way of escape from his unhappy surroundings. There was not a sign of joy on his face at the thought of release, as one might have expected. To have been proven innocent would not have made him, even in his own opinion, a hero, for he was really guilty, and all now knew full well why he had come and lived at the Carson's home and why he had absented himself from all public

gatherings until the Fair. It was another's goodness which had gained him the appearance of freedom. Death would have been welcome to D'Arcy in that hour but for one thing: it dawned on him that he must live to repay the price of his freedom.

Mr. Carson was jubilant, with tears of joy in his kindly and honest eyes; though he never had wronged a man in his life in the matter of money and despised a thief and a defrauder, yet he loved D'Arcy, and that made such a difference! Proud old fellow, his affection for D'Arcy was that of a father for a son. When two years ago the young man had come to his door he believed him honest in his request for work and so gave it to him, though often at first the question crossed his mind "Why should this bright young fellow remain here?" Meantime great devotion had sprung up between them, and above all, the young man who had driven Favorite to victory would not be deserted by Alex. Carson. Notwithstanding that he was proven unquestionably guilty his soul still clung to him with great fondness.

The two men saw no one else, so absorbed were they, and in such haste was D'Arcy to get away from the hotel and crowded town. "Would you like to see Canon Battershall?" asked Mr. Carson, with pathos and softness in his deep voice, as they walked together towards the outbuildings where were the horses and carriage.

"No, no, let me get away at once! I'll get Favorite, and you the buggy Mr. Carson."

Boys, and curious idle men had meantime gath-

ered about to gaze on the hero of the race who had fallen so quickly into misfortune.

In a short space of time Favorite was ready and prancing to be off. Mr. Carson took the reins and avoiding the more public way of the front street, turned north up the hill on the slope of which the town stood, and crossing the market square with rapid strides, they soon disappeared among the buildings and the abundant maple trees gleaming in their autumn colours.

Once out of town the beast was slowed down to a walk and maintained this easy gait that the two men might talk freely of all that had taken place.

For the first time since the arrest occurred they were alone and both were silent with great emotion. D'Arcy had quivering lips, and tears which refused to be suppressed; he quickly brushed them aside with his coat sleeve and tried to speak, but the muscles of his throat became rigid and full of pain. Mr. Carson came to the rescue of the young unfortunate. "D'Arcy, my boy, let it not worry you too much; it will come out all right."

To which the stricken young man replied:

"Just think of all you have been, and your family too, to me. I am glad little Jennie does not know."

The response of feeling in the old man's soul was deep and quick. Age and fatherhood brings increase of tenderness to every true man's soul and compassion for erring youth widens beyond all limits. D'Arcy had become a son to him in the past year and a half, and only the tears of his young companion could hold back his own. His

big hand fell softly on D'Arcy's and he held it firmly.

"Never mind my boy, it'll be alright; it'll be all right."

Gaining control of himself D'Arcy now said in a low stifled voice, "Take me to the depot, let me get away out of the country! I can't go home! I must get away! I could not face those who have been so kind to me."

"D'Arcy! exclaimed Mr. Carson firmly, "I would not hear of such a thing. It would be unkind to me for I want you to come—and to my wife and daughter also—You must come!"

The near approach of home deepened these genuine feelings and he exclaimed:

"I cannot, I cannot, I am not fit to see them again!"

"But D'Arcy, we want you," interrupted Mr. Carson firmly.

"I have deceived you all these months," was the reply.

"No D'Arcy," said Mr. Carson, "you have not quite deceived me. I felt there was something wrong somewhere. This particular thing I did not expect. But it is over now and we've all grown fond of you and we want you to stay with us and help us. Whatever you were in the past, you have been honest and kind to us. I have given you small wages, but I have something for you. I am glad the mystery is solved; you are young, you can start again. Mark you, I don't make light of the crime you committed; honesty is the basis of manhood.

A man must pay for his sins in this world in some fashion."

"And others must pay too" interjected the distressed young man.

"It was coming to you," continued Mr. Carson. I won't say it wasn't, and more too. But D'Arcy," (here the tears did come to the old man's eyes and his face took on a wondrously kind expression) "you are my boy, you have taken the place of my dear son and I can't let you go yet. Stay and we'll make good together. I will help you to get the money to pay your friend in Montreal, for this is your first duty, you owe it and you must pay it, if it takes you a life-time.

"Yes, I'll pay the money," he replied, "but how can I pay you and your family for all your kindness?

"By staying with us yet a while:" was the old man's quick reply, and he added, "there are debts which cannot be paid in gold and this is one of them."

"Then I'll stay, at least, at least for a time, for you have been so good."

D'Arcy heaved a sigh, then a smile came upon his face, and he exclaimed: "Oh, what a fool! What a fool! I felt it was coming, and the worst of it is that others have to suffer as well as myself. I can't help feeling a relief now it's over. And my mother...."

"Yes," said Mr. Carson, "tell me about your mother—you have never said a word."

"Mr. Carson, she's dead. I saw her one night in my dreams, and I am sure I saw her once last

winter in the woods; she seemed so kind and wanted to help me, but when I went near her she left me; she seemed to be a spirit, a ghost, as we say.

“Mr. Carson,” he continued, “I want to explain before we get home why Miss Battershall and I are so much together. Canon Battershall was our clergyman at home on the Gatineau when I was a boy. He was not “Canon” then, but I remember him perfectly. He does not remember me, but Eugenie is aware of who I am and she has kept the secret. She has found out that mother is dead and father has left the old home and gone to British Columbia.”

Mr. Carson looked at D’Arcy in amazement. “Well for the like of this! That’s a caution—a caution. This is a strange world,” he exclaimed.

“Mr. Battershall has not an idea, not an inkling of who I am.”

This brought the conversation to an end, and the journey too, for there among the pines and the beech trees stood the home of honest and kind Mr. Carson.

On entering Mrs. Carson met D’Arcy with tears in her eyes and kissed him. Phyllis came forth laughing happily, that she might keep back deeper emotions and greeted him without a word, then the two women quickly returned to the kitchen to get ready the supper. D’Arcy having thrown aside his overcoat turned and was going to his room when to his utter surprise and undoing he met Eugenie coming quickly down the stairs; she offered him her hand with great show of kindness

on her beautiful face. D'Arcy thought he had never looked upon anything half so divine; nor had he.

They passed without any show of affection save that which must appear on the countenance of lovers and declare itself in the firm grip of the hands. D'Arcy went to his room and Eugenie to the kitchen to help Phyllis. When half an hour had gone by, all was in readiness and Mrs. Carson called the household to supper in the kitchen where the table had been made specially bright with the great centre lamp, and was attractively decorated with autumn flowers—the work of Eugenie. Phyllis had prepared a chicken and Mrs. Carson had made one of D'Arcy's favorite cakes.

“A glorious feast,” remarked Mr. Carson smiling pleasantly as he took the head of the table and began to carve the chicken. Conversation now grave, now light, on one subject of local concern or another, was carried on, carefully avoiding, however, what was uppermost in the minds of all.

Suddenly the dogs outside began running and barking furiously round the house. Back and forward, across the yard they went, and finally came to a halt under the beech-trees.

“What can all this mean?” enquired Mr. Carson.

“Let's go and see,” exclaimed D'Arcy, and forth he hurried followed by Mr. Carson and the two young women.

Night had fallen but the moon shone above the beeches in a cloudy sky and the spaces of heaven were filled with silvery light, only among the pine

boughs and on the shadowed side of the beech trees was there darkness.

Into a network of curving, crossing boughs, through which the silvery moonbeams fell in their delicate splendour, two gleaming eyes appeared.

"A catamount!" exclaimed Mr. Carson who first beheld them. "Quite common, these nuisances. Get out of the way Sport. You'd think it was a bear you were after!"

The dog obeyed and Mr. Carson turned and walked back to the house more attracted by the supper table just then, than the catamount in the tree top.

D'Arcy stayed on with the two young women to guide their efforts and satisfy their desire to see the two gleaming eyes high up among the branches Phyllis was the first to get a glance of them and exclaiming with satisfaction turned and ran to the house.

"Eugenie you must see them too."

"I'm longing to, D'Arcy."

"Stand just here" said he," and you'll get your best view."

And she did stand close in by the stout, dark trunk of the beech tree and D'Arcy stood there close beside her. Both faces were upturned towards the gleaming eyes and on them both the silver moonbeams fell through an open space among the boughs. D'Arcy's hand was uplifted above Eugenie's head to guide her efforts to see the gleaming eyes, and when she saw and said so, D'Arcy's arm came down—it fell upon Eugenie's shoulder and went about her neck. Eugenie

turned her face toward him and said "D'Arcy."—He only said "My darling," and kissed her. They left the spot and very quickly returned to the house full of that joy which love kindles and many waters cannot quench.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE CONFESSION

NOT many days after the events recorded in the last chapter, D'Arey did that which he had previously thought to be impossible. Urged by Eugenie to do so, he followed the way of manly honesty, took Favorite, drove to the town unaccompanied, and called on his friend and rector for the avowed purpose of making a clean breast of things.

On knocking at the door he was received by the Canon himself, greeted with genuine kindness and shown at once into the study. He was given a chair and the clergyman sat down opposite him and took him by the hand. D'Arey tried to speak but the pressure of emotion was too great. Consequently the clergyman desiring to give the young man time to recover his composure rose up, stood beside him, placed his hand on his shoulder and spoke at some length on his own favourite topic.

"You know D'Arey," said he, with tenderness in his voice, "it is my belief that God is ever trying to reach us and make us conscious of His presence. This is not easy to do, not even for God; for to reach us is not to come at us in any physical way, but to awaken in us a sense of His presence. He, of course, is with us always and is ever aware

of our presence, but we have not reached the goal when we are convinced of this; we must likewise become aware of His. The final step is for us and God to converse. 'Speak to Him for He heareth,' says the poet. 'I will come in and will sup with him,' saith the Scripture. This is for the individual the highest delight, as well as the chief good of life, and in the language of philosophers is the *summum bonum*; this, in the language of the pulpit is salvation: it is at such a moment that 'there is joy in the presence of the angels of God'."

Now, D'Arcy, let me tell you, my boy," continued Mr. Battershall, taking his seat again, "all nature is one harmonious scheme for the accomplishing of this purpose. God is trying to attract our attention as it were through the flashing of unfamiliar signals. Having learnt the meaning of the cypher we may determine the message. And so, he sends forth the winds upon a thousand errands, but the final one is to caress the face of man and to say on God's behalf, 'I am here'; and the sunlight, too, while it gives life to the fields and glory to the sea, and causes the mountains and hills to soften and bud before us, has yet a nobler purpose—even to make us feel that God Himself is near: and the flowers, delicate little spots of colour and sweet odours; and the birds which sing and flutter and pause and sing again; and those perfumed breaths which come, we know not how, from tree or shrub or the ground itself refreshed with rain and the sun's warm rays after; I cannot but see that these are all God's messengers saying, 'Are you there, my child? Awake for I am here'.

And I, for one, choose to feel it is so and that my daily course is through a world which is not desolate and without friendly inhabitant but is on the contrary a garden of beauty having a dear and holy presence which desires to know me and to work with me.

“D’Arcy, my boy, my son, you go out this time into another world, for your eyes are open and you see that God re-created the summer field—and us.

There were great tears of tenderness in the soft eyes of Canon Battershall as he gripped D’Arcy’s hand more firmly and rose to let the young man depart.

And D’Arcy rose too, he was dry-eyed, and speechless; his face had not lost its natural keenness however, but was pale and drawn and steady; a change had come over it which was but a reflection of that which had come to his own soul. There had vanished quite away from his countenance the self-assurance which had ever marked his features and his whole bearing in former days. He stood before the minister and would not let go his hand, and he gazed steadily into his eyes without a blink or a quiver.

“Mr. Battershall, I believe all you have told me, but to me it has no meaning whatever.”

“Why not, my son?”

“I don’t know, but I am outside it all.”

This startled the clergyman and he said firmly and kindly, “Sit down my boy, we are not ready to part yet.” So saying Canon Battershall left D’Arcy, went forward, closed the door of his

study, bolted it and returned, and with less of emotion on his countenance spoke thus.

"Now D'Arcy we are alone. If the presence of God means nothing to you there is a reason for it. God can make His presence felt through anything but sin. Harbored sin is an insulator. D'Arcy you must tell me all that is on your mind—there is something yet kept back."

"There is, sir, I have deceived you, Canon.

"How so, D'Arcy?"

"Sir, you knew me when I was a boy. You knew my father and my mother, on the Gatineau many years ago. I am D'Arcy Conyers from—from—Aylwin, your old parish!"

Canon Battershall looked at him in blank amazement.

"D'Arcy Conyers from the Gatineau; he exclaimed, his very eyes penetrating the young man's countenance. "One of my own boys!"

"Yes sir, once," said D'Arcy, covering his face in great distress of soul.

"Yes D'Arcy and now," said Canon Battershall, stepping quickly forward and laying his hand on the young man's shoulder. "D'Arcy my boy, I remember you now. You were in Danford School when I came there in the old days. I remember your Uncle Peter and 'White Hairs' as you used to call him, and your father."

Canon Battershall stopped short in his speaking for a moment, turned away his head, then walked to the door of his study and back again, to control his rising emotion; then he laid his hand on the young man's head and said "D'Arcy;" at which

the young man looked into the eyes of his friend; "D'Arcy," said he again, "I remember your mother; is she alive?"

This was more than the son's nature could endure. His chin quivered, his eyes filled, but his tongue found no words. He could only shake his head for, 'no' and then dropped his face into his hands to hide his grief. Mr. Battershall stood over him and stroked his hair as he might that of a child, and was speechless with emotion and sorrow. Soon, however, he recovered himself and bending forward spoke tenderly:

"D'Arcy my boy, I have always liked you, and my affection is greater than ever for you now you have opened your soul to me. There is another step, however, which must be taken and that before we leave this room; this whole confession must be laid before God Himself.

"Sir, you have been to me as 'Lord' almost. I would have lost hope many a time but for you. You kept recalling my best days—my boyhood, every time I saw you and Eugenie.

"Yes, D'Arcy," said Mr. Battershall firmly. "Frankness with me is well enough but frankness with God is essential; there will be no sense of His presence otherwise." And there on the study floor the two knelt down, the rector's right hand on the young penitent's shoulder; and God gave to both His peace and the sense of His gracious presence.

When they rose something played on the tear-stained face of young Conyers. Soon a cloud came again upon his countenance and he said, "Canon Battershall. despair covers me when I

think of Mother. I can't tell her that I love her, or how sorry I am; she died without knowing what had become of me. Shall I ever see her again and tell her what a wretch I have been and how I thought only of myself?"

"Yes, D'Arcy, you will see her again and you will not need to tell her. She knows and loves you still and I doubt not has done for you since she left the body what she could not when in the flesh; D'Arcy she is with you, near you."

He looked up. "Is that true sir? Do you know I thought I saw her once when in the woods in a snow storm? She was among the spruces and seemed to come towards me, and I ran towards her, but she was gone."

"But D'Arcy do you not remember the words, 'I am with you always'? enquired Canon Battershall with joy and hope in his face and in his voice.

"I do sir, but they refer to the Lord Himself."

"True, D'Arcy, but what said St. Paul when facing death—'to depart and to be with Christ is far better'. See now how it works out—the dead with Christ, and Christ is with us, and so we are all together. Oh! the joy of it!" he exclaimed throwing up his hands, "This is the communion of saints, my lad, not a new doctrine, but as old as Christ and the Christian Church."

"I wish I could feel it to be so sir."

"You may D'Arcy," and the minister's face shone as he patted the boy on his shoulder. "You will, that's your privilege—the sweet privilege of everyone—to know whom I have believed' as St. Paul says. Would you like to—really?"

“Yes sir, I’m sick of that other life. I want to walk with God, with frankness, with good men like you sir, and Mr. Carson. I hate, I despise my past!”

D’Arcy moved about the room in terrible anxiety. The clergyman stepped towards him quickly and walked by his side arm in arm, till they reached the farther end of the room, then said he to the young penitent, “It is mine to say, go in peace,” and opening the door he led him forth upon the church grounds, saying, “You may D’Arcy, and from hence forth you will walk with the Living Lord from day to day, then will you walk with all good men also and with the saints, and with your mother.”

And as he went again on his way the sun was shining brightly upon the church, upon the trees and the grass, upon the gleaming lake—and in the heart of D’Arcy Conyers.

It did not occur to him just then, poor boy, that the sun was also shining that very hour upon a grave, not yet grass covered, on the green hill-side nearby the little red church of St. John in the Wilderness; nor did he yet know just how it came to be there, so the reader must be informed.

S. Conyers and his wife Jane returning from the Police Court in Montreal determined to reward Mr. Benson for his generosity, and three months had not gone by until they had done so; for borrowing the money, Mr. Conyers gave first mortgage on his property by way of security and sent the amount required at once to Mr. Benson. Then came the struggle to pay off the liabil-

ity; the burden was heavier now than it used to be for Mrs. Conyers, not only because she had grown older but also because of the long absence of D'Arcy—and in the end the grassless grave was seen by the passersby of the Church of St. John in the Wilderness; and poor old S. Conyers, light of heart and full of pluck was long borne up in the struggle by the fact that he had made good to Mr. Benson. But the failing health of Jane, and then the grassless grave in the churchyard was too much for him. They had so long struggled together that he could not struggle alone—not among the Gatineau Hills anyhow, and so disposing of all he had, he slipped off quietly to the gold fields of British Columbia, where he chanced to make a considerable fortune.

Then one day he was taken suddenly ill, and while the attention which he received was the best a western mining town could afford, S. Conyers did not care to fight for recovery: "It's not worth while, Doctor; it's not worth while," said he, without Jane." And so he passed the shadow-line, let us hope, to be with Jane.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A WEDDING—A TRIUMPH—A MARRIAGE

FAVORITE, the buggy, and D'Arcy in the morning twilight and the mist were crossing the valley of Willow Brook; like some dark reality they seemed, moving in a phantom world of white.

The grinding of the carriage wheels in the deep sand and the dull thuds of Favorite's quick flying feet, caught the ear; these were the only sounds to be heard. True the hour was an early one and man had not yet gone forth to his labour nor the flocks and herds to their grazing. Only D'Arcy and Favorite were abroad on a special mission for the wedding feast; and they were speeding through the mists low-lying in the valley of Willow Brook. One might have expected to hear the singing of the birds at the wake of day, but it was August again and their chorusing was given over for the season; hence there was no music.

When D'Arcy and Favorite drew near the crossing of the bridge there was heard a momentary sounding of the waterfall; then the rattling noises of the carriage on the timbers; and after, only the grinding of the buggy wheels in the sand and the noise of Favorite's hoofs. Soon even this break in the silence grew faint, because the ground began

to rise, and Favorite to slacken her pace in consequence.

And now a steep hillside rose before them in the way. Its black base could already be discerned through the mist. While Favorite was plodding up the long ascent, morning began to come in good earnest: the little spire of St. Bride's on the hillside appeared in outline among the pines; and the curve of the ridge beyond it against the sky was in brighter light. The sky itself was blue, very blue indeed and it was clear save for some fleecy clouds strewn about in silvery light.

On a sudden the mists on the mountainside and about the church became, like the fleecy clouds, silvered in every particle with light.

"O that Phyllis could see this sight;" he exclaimed, (for it was her wedding day, not his own) "could anything be more fitting than such a morning for the bridal day of such a woman: lowly before her God, dutiful to her father, the very soul of laughter, though treading the round of common tasks and about to marry this honest fellow, commonplace in mind and soul, but successful.

"But God, who am I, to criticise? Well, Favorite, we shall do what we can to make the event a happy one for Phyllis."

"This morning," he went on to think, "is a setting for the marriage of a queen. God has His queens as well as nations; who knows but this superb morning is His way of letting men see, if only they would, how he gladdens the very world for the sake of such a bride as Phyllis Carson."

D'Arcy, and the carriage and Favorite, coming

up the long ascent from the valley of Willow Brook, emerged at the glen's mouth on the open road within full view of St. Bride's. The little sanctuary was veiled in the silvery mist save for the turret whereon the cross stood; the mist thereabout was turning to gold and red and purple and emerald.

"How wonderful!" exclaimed D'Arcy, and there arose in him a consciousness that earth was touched with heaven, that his own soul was alive, and all the world about him spiritual through and through. Soon a joyous intensity spread over him as of a new and fuller life which must needs find vent in song and rapidity of motion. So D'Arcy broke into singing; louder and louder the next two miles home, he poured out his soul on the morning air, caring not who heard him, anxious rather that all should hear and understand; and Favorite, catching somewhat of her master's spirit, flew with utmost delight up hill and down dale till she drew up under the pine trees at the Carson home where all things were in readiness for the wedding.

After breakfast, when the moment came his way, D'Arcy told Phyllis of his vision and his thoughts concerning her. And Phyllis was moved to tears—great, sweet,—tender satisfying tears, and she kissed D'Arcy for the first time in her life, and called him "Brother, dear brother." And this noble maid went more happily to her own wedding because of D'Arcy's affection, and more faithfully and joyously did she live with her husband—the story whereof is written on no perishing page but

only in the great Book of Life itself, which God and the angels keep.

Ours it is, however, to relate an incident of the wedding day which brings the story of D'Arey Conyers to an end.

Many were the guests which that happy event brought to the Carson home, and among them a young barrister of fine appearance, well bred, of cultured bearing but of more than doubtful reputation, as D'Arey suspected, and as the companions of Julius Mason Thornberry very well knew.

This young man's chief reason for accepting the invitation to the wedding of Phyllis Carson was his conclusion that Eugenie Battershall was quite certain to be there, not only because she was on such terms of intimacy with the bride, but because her father was driving out specially to perform the marriage ceremony. As he anticipated, so it came to pass, and Mr. Thornberry drove unaccompanied in a fine carriage into the Carson grounds within half an hour after the arrival of Canon Battershall and his charming daughter.

Eugenie, looking out of Phyllis' window, noted his entrance and shuddered as she thought of her obligation to greet him as a member of her father's congregation. "He will want me to drive home with him after the wedding, and what ever will I do?" said she to Phyllis.

"Never mind dear, you are my bridesmaid to-day and I will arrange for D'Arey to take you with Favorite. So count on that my dear, and inform Thornberry accordingly when he asks you. We

had to have him you know, he is Dad's solicitor and does a good deal of business for him."

"O good! Then I'll tell him its your arrangement, Phyllis dear, and I am sure D'Arcy will be smart enough."

The marriage ceremony was over, for the due celebration of which the whole party had driven to St. Bride's as one would expect, knowing the Carson family.

The bride and groom attended by Eugenie Battershall and D'Arcy Conyers greeted their guests and made merry and feasted under the pines and the beech trees which had given guardianship, and colour, and shadow, and music to the home of the family for so many years.

And all in turn greeted them happily, offering congratulations, and smiling and laughing joyously. Thornberry was among the many. His wishes were expressed with much show of courtesy and not a little jocularity. Eugenie shrank from him instinctively; D'Arcy maintained a civil demeanor and wore a little smile as it were of triumph, knowing full well that Thornberry's jocularity was but a screen to cover his passion and his jealousy. And D'Arcy's ears were alert to catch any words which might chance to fall from the lips of Thornberry—and catch them he did, and most offensive words they were—one of which only will be repeated on this page; "Jail-bird." "The Jail-bird is in luck to-day," remarked Thornberry as he joined a group of his companions a little way off, and D'Arcy heard, and D'Arcy's anger boiled within him.

Now it may have been observed by the careful reader of this story, which exposes the weaknesses of D'Arcy Conyers, that of one sin he has never been accused for the very good and sufficient reason that D'Arcy was never guilty of it, and therefore had not to confess it that day in the rector's study. For this freedom he had to thank his stars as the saying is, but much more his family record and traditions. In the Conyers standard of life it was the unpardonable sin. Ostracism was the consequence of it, disgrace, which there was no overlooking, followed in its wake. In this atmosphere D'Arcy had grown up. And while most other commands in the decalogue were set at naught secretly or otherwise in the course of the family history, this one was known and rigidly observed even by D'Arcy himself.

Thus the depths of his being were unsullied, his body was sound, and his mind pure, and there was no contamination in the blood. This was the spring of his personal hope of winning Eugenie and the origin of his contempt for Thornberry. That creature was in the habit of violating at will the sacred law of manhood, and yet possessed the effrontery to hope that he could pass unsuspected and unsnubbed in the society of respectable people, as though indeed by changing his clothes and speaking in the language of a gentleman he could cover up the fact that he was a blackguard and a moral cancer. And often D'Arcy was aroused to secret fury by the very thought that such a moral pest should aspire to touch the hand of Eugenie Battershall. "I am bad enough, heaven

knows, but a man of Thornberry's way of life contaminates by his very presence."

It was into this state of mind that D'Arcy was come when his attentive ear caught the words "Jail-bird."

When the wedding feast was over he drove Eugenie and her father back to Barrie as arranged for him that morning by the bride. He parted with them at the rectory door and had driven scarcely a third of the way on his return to the Carson home when he beheld far down the long hill by the great swamp, a carriage approaching, which could be none other than that of Thornberry. D'Arcy had a moment for quieting his rage; long had he schooled himself in this subjecting of his feelings, and now once more he exercised his mastery over them and began to whistle. He recalled that his muscles were hard from farm work and his fists like iron. Favorite was trained to obey him and would stand. Thornberry on the contrary drove a beast on hire from the livery.

In every way therefore he had the advantage over his rival, though Thornberry was a large man, well built, handsome and pompous. Both were unaccompanied, and the long open road revealed the fact, (a disturbing one to Thornberry) that no other carriages were in sight. He recalled his remark about D'Arcy and feared lest perchance it might have been overheard; and as a blackguard is always a coward, so it was now with Thornberry. His fears increased with every step that brought him nearer to the momentous meeting with his opponent and his rival. He re-

solved not to fight if threatened but to resort to hypocrisy—he would feign great delight with the wedding and pleasure at meeting D'Arcy.

And so he was coming forward with a broad smile on his face and joyous greetings on his lips when, to his surprise and astonishment he observed that D'Arcy's horse had been brought to a stop square on the middle of the road. In another instant it was evident that his worst fears were to be realized, for D'Arcy threw off his coat and came towards him.

“Hello, D'Arcy!” Thornberry called out. “What's the matter? A breakdown?”

The greeting was scarcely uttered when D'Arcy gripped Thornberry's horse by its bridle and brought it to a standstill. Another spring and he was at Thornberry's side and had the reins.

“D'Arcy is not my name, Thornberry, but ‘Jail-bird’, and to jail I'll go again if I must, but I'll smash your head in any event, you moral pest.”

So saying he gripped Thornberry by the coat collar and pulled him out of the buggy.

“What do you mean? I'll have you arrested! You've torn my clothes!” exclaimed the indignant gentleman.

“Yes, and I'll tear your hide as well,” was D'Arcy's reply.

“I say, look here, I didn't mean it old man,” Thornberry ejaculated.

Words were now few, for D'Arcy got him by the throat and thrusting him against the buggy wheels, ejected these words close to his face. “You coward! You blackguard!”

“I’ll take it all back,” cried out Thornberry in a choked voice.

“You bet you’ll take it back, and you’ll take more than that back!”

“Oh! For heaven’s sake!” Thornberry exclaimed.

“If you were a man, I’d smash your pate,” said D’Arcy, with disgust in every muscle of his face,” but as you are only a dog, I’ll throw you into the ditch,” and so saying, he chucked him forward from the wheels, turned him about and then shot him backward into the muddy ditch by the roadside.

“There, you reprobate, is where you belong!” he exclaimed, and leaving Thornberry to extricate himself as best he could, D’Arcy jumped into his own buggy and drove Favorite away to the scene of the recent wedding in the Carson home.

It was lonely without Phyllis and Eugenie could not be persuaded to come now that her companion had gone; the prospect of winter at the Carson’s was the prospect of oppressive loneliness. Yet D’Arcy determined to yield to Mr. Carson’s urgent request and dwell with them till spring should come again.

And come it did at last though it seemed to tarry long, laden with new hopes, and new enablings. On the black fir tops above the white snow the old crow cawed again; the roads on the countryside went bad; the hilltops came up through the snow and the sheep went nibbling on them; new rivulets began gurgling in all directions and old brooks increased their strength with fresh waters; the

robins began chirruping in the early morning; the cows went to wandering out in search of pasture; soon the farmers started ploughing and scattering seeds, and the sparrows came to sing again on the fence rails; and mother nature renewed herself in all her parts and grew young in the mercy of providence.

And as the days went by summer came back also, every day a little closer, every morning a little more endued with power.

And on one such fine morning when the steep hillside above the little church in Barrie, was clad again with green, and all the trees rustled their new foliage in the breeze, little Ernest, the Verger, began to ring the bell in the tower; he banged it and twanged it, he tumbled it and tossed it, till Canon Battershall ran over in hot haste to see what was the matter. "Sir," said he, puffing with exertion, "It is for Miss Eugenie, you know, sir; I could not let her wedding day go quietly by."

"But Ernest, my boy, did you not know that the marriage is to take place—privately?"

"Yes sir, I did, but I just had to ring for Miss Eugenie. Everybody knows of it, sir, and you can't keep them away. You will not lock the door, will you, sir—for the whole town wants to come?"

And when an hour later the happy couple stood before the altar to be proclaimed man and wife, the beautiful church was crowded in every corner, old women were crying, young ones were smiling and little girls were ready with their flowers which, a moment later, they scattered profusely on the red carpet of the aisle, down which Eugenie came,

beautiful and most gracious, on the arm of D'Arcy Conyers.

Mr. Carson's fine carriage and splendid pair of grey horses, beautifully brushed and harnessed for the occasion were standing ready at the church door when the bride and groom arrived. Mr. Carson himself held the reins and was in a high state of joyous excitement. The spirited animals seemed to share the novelty of what was going on. Young girls were showering the happy couple with rice—children were waving flags. There were smiles on every face, and tears, if not in every eye, at least in every heart as Mr. and Mrs. D'Arcy Conyers entered the carriage, and were driven off to the railway depot, where crowds had gathered to look upon the happy couple and to bid them God speed on the journey of life.

At the moment of their arrival the long dark train was seen curving round the end of the lake, and soon it drew up by the landing stage. The conductor's feet had scarcely touched the platform when he called out, "All aboard! All aboard!" and the train was soon off again along the rising shore of the glorious bay, carrying D'Arcy Conyers and sweet Eugenie Battershall to the great Canadian West—a land of hope and of new beginnings.

THE END.

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